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A GERMAN STAFF OFFICER IN INDIA

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A GERMAN STAFF OFFICER IN INDIA:

BEING THE IMPRESSIONS OF AN OFFICER OF THE GERMAN GENERAL STAFF OF HIS TRAVELS THROUGH THE PENINSULA; WITH AN EPILOGUE SPECIALLY WRITTEN FOR THE ENGLISH EDITION

BY

COUNT HANS VON KOENIGSMARCK

AUTHOR OF "JAPAN AND THE JAPANESE"

AUTHORISED TRANSLATION BY

P. H. OAKLEY WILLIAMS

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To

LADY BLOOD

as a token of
sincere and respectful admiration for the Englishwoman in
India to whom Great Britain owes an incalculable debt
for pride of place and power in the Peninsula, in
gratitude for the most generous hospitality
extended to me on my travels, and in
memory of many a happy day
spent beneath Indian skies

This book is respectfully
Dedicated

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[*Photo by Val L'Estrange*

LADY BLOOD

Wife of General Sir Bindon Blood

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FOREWORD

My book will be ready for a new circle of readers soon after I have completed my fourth visit to the Peninsula. Consequently, grateful recollections of Anglo-Indian hospitality are very vivid in my memory; and, although I have tried to express my gratitude and sense of obligation for benefits received in their proper time and place in the pages that follow, there are some whose introductions opened many doors to me, a stranger and a sojourner in a strange land, to whom I may not have expressed the recognition I feel. My thanks for letters of introduction are more particularly due to Julia Marchioness of Tweeddale, whose kindly interest in my Indian experiences has always been unfailing, and to Sir William Evans-Gordon; to Lord Morley of Blackburn, His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, and his predecessor in office, the Earl of Crewe; to the late Sir Curzon Wyllie, of the India Office, by whose tragic death I feel I have lost a personal friend whose interest in my impressions of India was only equalled by his many

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acts of personal kindness towards me; to Sir Edward Hutton; to General and Mrs Henniker; and to Sir Douglas Straight, Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, to whose kind offices and encouragement I shall be indebted for the pleasure of seeing my book in its English version. I am also very grateful for the kind and generous reception, even when they chastened me, the great organs of the London press gave to the German edition of my book in the spring. In fact, so many and representative have been the friends who spared themselves no trouble to make my way through India plain, that I might almost flatter myself I owe my thanks to the hospitable instincts of the British nation.

Of those of whose kind reception of me in India during my recent visit I shall always cherish grateful memories are His Excellency the Viceroy, the Earl of Minto, Sir George Clarke, Lieutenant-Governor of Bombay, the Maharajahs of Ulwar and Kashmir, and the Diwan of Pallanpur. Since my return to Europe, another obligation under which the Jam Sahib of Nawanagar has placed me is his kind permission to reproduce some of the photographs in the beautiful album he sent me, as illustrations for this book.

The name of the many friends whose hospitality I enjoyed and whose acquaintance I first

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made in India is, I am happy to believe, Legion. In these pages I have tried to express the sense of obligation I feel, and some recognition of the good-fellowship with which they welcomed me. Anglo-Indian hospitality will always furnish one of the happiest memories of my life. It was parting from these new-found friends that always made it hard for me to leave India, and on this last occasion perhaps harder than ever before. To them I can only say by the mouth of their great national poet:

> "If we do meet again, then we shall smile indeed;
> If not, this parting was well made."

KOENIGSMARCK.

BERLIN, *September* 1909.

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A GERMAN STAFF OFFICER IN INDIA

CHAPTER I

BACK TO INDIA

The twilight shadows of sombre virgin forest were still lying heavily on the Western world, its human cave-dwellers were still waging war against the aurox and the bear, when the sun of civilisation had, ages ago, risen over the rich campaign of India—Zarathustra and Buddha, constellations whose splendour irradiates both hemispheres.

The treasures the philosophy of those two great names bequeathed us defy computation—like a never-failing well-spring that must always refresh and invigorate the inconstant, restless humours of us Europeans.

From what other source could we—akin by race as we are to the Aryans of India, though for many a century we may have scavenged the intellectual heritage of the Roman and the Greek—hope to

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draw to greater profit than from the fountainhead of Sanscrit? For Latin and Greek, Celtic and Germanic are suckers from the same stem which puts forth the old sacred language as its mightiest growth.

It was in India that the cradle of our intellectual and ethical evolution stood; it was here that the West found its nurture in the rich milk of an uplifted outlook on life and of deep-rooted wisdom.

No less, too, did the material wealth which with prodigal extravagance has dowered the Peninsula contribute to the advancement of Western civilisation. For it was here that, fascinated by the dazzling glamour of the tropics, by the magnificence and luxuriance of the East, allured by the bait of all those diverse products that the teeming soil under the hot sun of India bears with the fertility of a forcing-house, the adolescent nations of Europe recruited their knowledge and their craft. It was here that they braced their youthful strength in the struggle for existence; here that they gleaned those experiences and resources that later on were to allot them place and voice in the council-chamber of the Powers.

It is in a spirit of deep reverence that I draw near this ancient, venerable land, the home of Buddha,

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the magic realm of the *Thousand and One Nights*, the storehouse of jewels and spices, the goal of unnumbered conquerors, scholars, and adventurers of all times and of all nations. I am making ready to enter this mysterious world, that, hedged off from its fellows of the North and West behind its towering ramparts of mountain giants, isolated alike from kindred as from alien races, has been sufficient to itself, and has ordered its life in accordance with laws of its own, for it was a world whose intellect and sentiments neither extraneous influences nor the course of ages have prevailed to affect. Its self-contained scheme of civilisation, its leisurely self-absorption, have made the people of India the recluse among nations, dominated to-day, as it was thousands of years ago, by an outlook on life and modes of thought which our duller commonplaceness finds it hard to conceive.

And yet the mentality of the Indians is not remote from our own; for us India is no alien land, for from the beginning of things she has played her part in the history of Europe, and her intellectual influence has left its mark in the annals of the spring-tide of the West. It was from the East that our forebears hailed; I am faring towards the land of their old home.

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CHAPTER II

THE TEMPLES OF MADURA

Consul Freundenberg: far sounded is his name in Indian lands. Full of gratitude I take my leave of the kindly master of Sirinevesa, whose cordial hospitality in Colombo I have now been privileged to enjoy for the third time.

After a twelve hours' passage we land at the southernmost point of India, at Tuticorin. Only a few passengers, for the most part commercial travellers, an American bride and bridegroom, one compatriot—a Professor of Sanscrit—and a Japanese officer, disembark from the little coasting steamer. As yet Tuticorin lies off the track of the great mail liners; for this southernmost part of the Peninsula is altogether too devoid of attractions for the tourist. There are neither hotels here nor gastronomic delights, nor are there any sights to be seen. For the temples of Madura would not compensate every one

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for the long, thirsty up-country journey which awaits the traveller for Madras from here. The German Professor was of other mind. He proposed to study India, thoroughly and systematically. The Japanese warrior, too, was resolved that nothing should escape him. "Asia for the Asiatics." Why, indeed, should Europe grab everything?

"Is this the Indian world poets make such a to-do about?" sighed the smart American bride as we steam on from station to station, from one stopping-place to the next. "We in America," grumbled her beardless husband in disgust up his sleeve. Barren and inhospitable the country remains, unrelieved by any change of scenery. In unchanging cruel monotony the sun-scorched plains run out in naked, treeless boulders. Only rarely do villages flit past, wretched tumble-down mud huts. The Professor surveyed the landscape above his spectacles and was very busy taking notes. From time to time he delivered lectures in not very intelligible English. He was never tired of pointing out how the dogma of the Trinity was foreshadowed in the Indian Trimurti; he quoted the Zendavestas and the Mahabharatas; passed on to a lengthy excursus on Visvamitra the King and Vasishtas the Cow; and continued to unearth fossils and mammoth

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bones, hitherto unexcavated, from his awesome memory.

If there are few signs of life on the fields, the stopping-places are the more animated. In a motley tangle the many-coloured crowd is pushing and elbowing in expectation of the trains, some in order to make use of them, some for other reasons or none at all. They shout and bawl, offend all one's senses—the sense of smell not least,—hustle and inconvenience the passengers. What a very great boon to traffic Germany's regulation forbidding access to the platform except on business would be here!

"What can you expect?" remarked the Professor, as the man from Japan shrugged his shoulders rather disparagingly. "They aren't Aryans at all. They are Tamils, the aborigines of India. They belong to the Dravidian race. When the Aryans invaded the Peninsula from the north, the Dravidian nations were driven southwards, until at length they found a home here."

The Japanese did not answer; he only smiled. When isn't Japan smiling?

After an eight hours' journey, we at last reached Madura, the destination of our journey for that day. On the platform a kaleidoscopic moving picture

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again. The water-sellers raise their monotonous cry "Pani pani" incessantly, and hundreds of naked arms from every carriage window hold out cups gleaming like gold for the refreshing draught. Sweetmeats soaked in grease, sugar-cane, cocoanuts, oranges, bananas are on sale for the travellers, who clutch greedily at these dainties. On the part of the European arrivals a fierce fight waged with words and fisticuffs against a rabble of coolies ensues. For every one of them seeks to earn his daily rations of rice at our expense. You haven't time or arms enough to protect your goods and chattels. I just see the portmanteau I have been guarding so carefully vanishing into the chocolate-coloured flood on the back of an unknown pirate. My other luggage drifts away in a different direction. Yet, marvellously enough, it all turns up without loss at the appointed place.

The atmosphere of the station is fairly overwhelming; the temperature rivals that of a draught furnace. The orb of the sun stands almost perpendicularly overhead; the thick, damp air is almost unbearably oppressive. To crown all, the concentrated reek of the Orient and the Occident.

You could not call the hotel in which we sought shelter for the night exactly first-class. It was what

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they call a "rest-house," managed by a native on go-as-you-please lines.

But, after all, the venerable Dravidian temples were what had brought us here. Their architectural magnificence and the manifold peculiarities of their sculptured ornamentation characterise them as the most interesting monuments, from an artist's point of view, in the south of the Peninsula. Built on rising ground, the massive bulk of the temple shrine enclosed behind its walls attracts one's gaze even from afar.

Here, in this the oldest centre of the Dravidian cult, temple adjoins temple, colonnades connect courts in endless vistas. Proud portals overarch the massive columns; tall towers and pagodas rise high into the air and proclaim the still unbroken power of Brahminism. Embodied in these mighty works, the majesty of this primeval hierarchy, outlasting every age, glares down upon us defiantly.

With tireless endurance and abnormal powers of imagination the chisel of the artist-craftsman has tortured the unyielding granite into the most marvellous of formations. Surfaces and lines are blotted out under the superfluity of plastic ornamentation that peoples the exterior as well as the interior of the buildings with the weirdest images of Brahmi-

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nical symbolism. Mythical creatures, weird fabulous beings, legendary heroes, and grinning idols assail the eye in wild and whirling multiplicity. The bias towards the supersensuous, peculiar to the Indian, the mysterious dread of the supernatural, made him model his divinities and demons on nightmare phantasies, and made him seek to personify his ideas of the Deity in the accumulation of monstrous attributes and of uncanny contortions.

Like the ground plans of all the temples of South India, those of Madura show three main features: the monumental approaches, the court of the inner sanctuary, and the sacred tank.

A fourfold row of columns, richly ornamented with decorations in bas-relief, supports the roof of the spacious pilgrims' court, which surrounds the chief temple. It is dedicated to Siva, the cruel destroyer of the world, and to his dread consort, the six-armed goddess Durga, in whose train devouring pestilences stalk. But only as far as the entrance to the shrine, where lion-like monsters keep awful guard, were we allowed to penetrate. Not even the Viceroy, so our priestly guide told us, would be allowed to cross the threshold. So we had to content ourselves with a passing glimpse of the three-eyed deity we saw enthroned in sitting posture in the background.

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A poverty-stricken rabble, covered with dust and boils, slouch about everywhere in swarms. Only men. They are devoting themselves to the joys of *dolce far niente.* It seems too great an effort to them even to beg. If they have enough to buy a woman —wife and slave in one—to work for them while they lie about idly in the sand and take their ease, they have accomplished their destiny.

The faithful are splashing about in the sacred tank, to which a broad flight of stone steps leads down. They are performing the ablutions prescribed by ritual in stagnant, plague-infected water.

We press our acknowledgments into the priest's ready palm, whereupon a smirk of satisfaction lights up his vulpine features. Three white chalk lines drawn perpendicularly from his forehead to his nose proclaim that the guardian of the shrine—the outside of him, at any rate—professes the sect of Siva.

Utterly bewildering is the throng in the temple courts: penitent fanatics, beggars in rags, lisping lunatics, bargaining peddlers, shrieking cripples, blood-stained sacrificial beasts, trumpeting elephants, and then the bell-ringing, tootling, and drum-beating of the ruthless, masterful, greedy priestcraft. The air is heavy with human and animal exudations and

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with the penetrating scent of strong essences and sickly attar of roses.

The American bride hurries away. I follow her on wingéd feet. Even the Professor's thirst for knowledge seems to be assuaged. He falls back on his cigar-case.

Only Japan sticks to it—moody and inquiring.

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CHAPTER III

MADRAS

"MADRAS, Sahib," my Indian servant announces, and wakes me from deep sleep. It is only six a.m., and yet how oppressive and sultry! And for all that, the date is the third of January. Throughout the whole year the thermometer is as high. Owing to the great volume of moisture the atmosphere contains, the effect of the heat is the more enervating.

Countless natives alight from the train. A stream of crude colour flows past my carriage window. The clamour is deafening, the usual accompaniment of intercourse with the crowd, that beats upon my ears. The Indian is passionately fond of travelling, and cannot have enough of it for his money. The idleness and loafing conditioned by railway travelling appeal to him. There is all the more uninterrupted opportunity for gossiping, smoking, and nibbling sweetmeats. To the Oriental time does not mean

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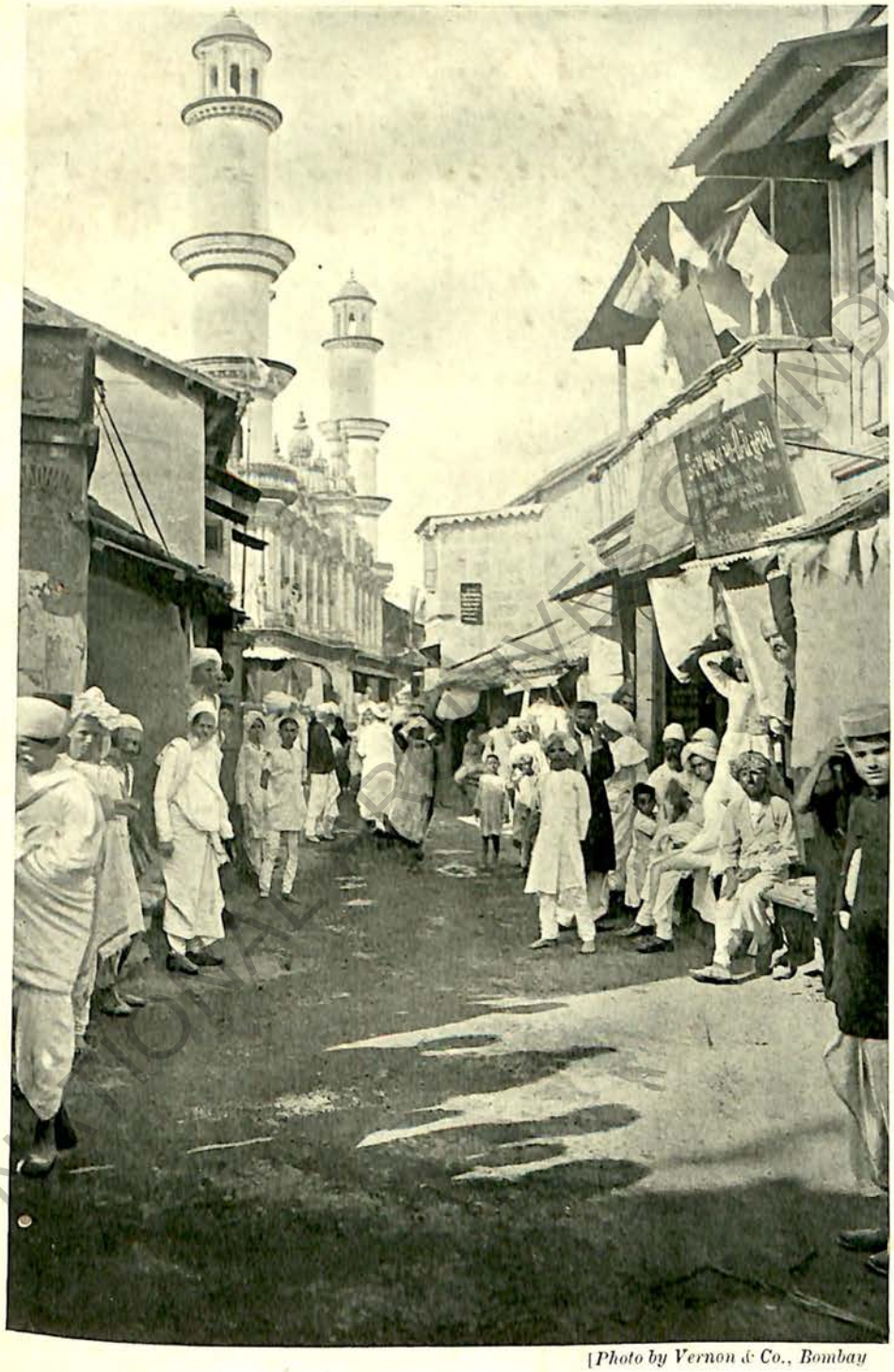

[*Photo by Vernon & Co., Bombay*

AN INDIAN BAZAAR

Where "you hear the East a' callin'"

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money. The hurry and restlessness, the surcharged energy, of the West are foreign to him. And in the tropics a certain phlegmatic indifference overtakes even the white man. The soft languor of the torrid zone, and the horizontal posture it soon becomes one's habit to adopt, see to that.

Thanks to the deft ministrations of my servant Paul—he is a baptized Hindoo—I am soon dressed.

On the platform two native servants, in splendid liveries of scarlet and gold, salute and, with the inimitable dignity of the Oriental, hand me a letter. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Arthur Havelock, my kindly Amphitryon of other days in Colombo, invites me to be his guest.

In the station yard a smart brougham is waiting. On account of the scorching sun and the dust during the day-time, Europeans for the most part adopt closed, or at any rate covered, conveyances.

The King's representative is living for the time being in Guindy Park, a palatial country-house situated beyond the gates of the town.

The fine English carriage-horses trot through the dirty, narrow, crowded streets of Madras at a smart pace. We soon leave the town behind us and are driving over a level green country, intersected by splendid broadly planned, shady highroads. A

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kaleidoscopic throng, on foot or in the saddle, is abroad on the roads. In addition to camels and horses, the donkey and mule subserve as means of locomotion. White, red, and yellow are the dominant hues of popular attire. You can frequently admire the bronzed, splendidly modelled bodies almost bare of clothing. Women with gleaming brass ornaments on their arms, silver anklets round their ankles, with their shawl-like garment flung in artistic folds over their shoulders or their hips, are carrying all sorts of loads on their heads. To this custom they owe their majestic upright bearing, their rhythmic, measured gait. Like creations of the antique the dark female forms glide past us, full of dignity and of quiet grace in every movement.

We turn off the highroad, and a forest of cocoa-nut palms, of huge cacti, of fig-trees and bananas, engulfs us. In between thick undergrowth, flowering shrubs, tropical plants of every kind. Purple trusses of blossom, golden yellow clusters of flowers, gleam out among the polished verdure of the foliage. Dull like satin here, brilliantly polished there, it emphasises the rich variety of the vegetation. Anon the landscape reminds one of an English park. Groups of mighty timber, to all seeming endless stretches of meadowland, well-kept paths, luxuriant

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lawns. We meet one or two "civilised" natives —if trousers and a short pipe constitute a claim to the epithet.

In its setting of blue shimmering woods, the mansion now appears in view. Out of a sea of flowers and grasses of every colour its white walls rise to an imposing height.

Sir Arthur Havelock welcomes me on the terrace of his country-house in his cordial, unassuming fashion, and shows me at once to my rooms. Here, thanks to the punkhas fanning the air, a refreshing breath of coolness pervades all the rooms. I welcome this ingenious device with heartfelt satisfaction, if not without timid forebodings of rheumatism in the future.

There is a big dinner-party at the Governor's every evening. Only the native servants, well-grown men in scarlet- and gold-embroidered liveries, barefooted according to the custom of the country, remind you of the East; otherwise you might imagine yourself at an English country-house.

His Excellency's aides-de-camp look after my entertainment in the most kindly way. We gallop along the shore, explore the country in the coach, play tennis, admire the huge Victoria Regia—the Governor's hobby—in the limpid ponds of the

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beautiful grounds. We pay visits to the club and to the sights of Madras.

The town extends along the sea-shore. Modern houses, washed white or yellow or pink, line the beach, and stand out in picturesque relief against the green of the background or the brown of the soil. Stately public buildings furnish the centre of the European settlement. Indian, Mauresque, and English styles rub shoulders. Southwards, hard by the sea, the historic Fort St George recalls the first anxious days of the foundation of British rule in India, and the bloody struggle between English and French for supremacy in the Peninsula. The castle of St George embodies the first freehold tenement England secured in Asia.

The memories of those great days are preserved in paintings—pictures of English deeds of arms on Indian soil—which decorate the throne-room of Government House, while in the entrance-hall an everlasting memorial in marble commemorates the outstanding personalities of that heroic epoch. Whose heart does not beat faster at the sight of the sublime figures of a Clive, of a Wellington, of a Warren Hastings, of a Munro? Who could pass them by without paying them his tribute of silent homage?

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CHAPTER IV

THE NILGIRI HILLS

"I KNOW you are very keen on horses," the Governor said to me one evening when we were strolling through the gardens in the glorious moonlight, to look at Sir Arthur's favourite, the Victoria Regia. "If you like, Pirie will be very glad to accompany you to Ootacamund."

What sportsman's breast would not throb in joyous anticipation at the prospect of hunting in Ootacamund, the El Dorado of them that wear pink in India? Two days later I take my leave of my genial host, and in Captain Pirie's company leave the hot, foggy atmosphere of Madras, laden with dust and microbes, behind me.

Ootacamund, the Governor's summer residence, lies in the west of Southern India amid the Nilgiri Hills.

Twelve hours of hot, dusty railway travelling, and

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at about nine o'clock in the morning our train pulls up for long stop at Salem. English people make a point, even when they are travelling, of taking their meals at the accustomed hours and in wonted plenty.

Late in the afternoon we reach, *via* Koimbatu, Metapolian, the terminus of the line, situate at the foot of the Nilgiri Hills. A tonga awaits us here, a two-wheeled covered cart drawn by two horses, to take us on to Ootacamund. The little skinny beasts fall into a sort of galloping lope, and at a smart pace we climb the hill road against the collar all the time. Cultivated only in patches, the country has to some extent preserved its aboriginal features. The landscape in changeful beauty flows swiftly past us. At first paddy-fields, then whole forests of areca palm. What a glorious tree! Upborne on a lofty slender trunk, it lifts its sapphire crown majestically to heaven. Enormous clumps of bamboos, insinuating their light plumage here and there among the palm groves, strive to outbid their more stately rivals in grace and attractiveness.

The fair, broad carriage-road crosses streams, clear as silver cascades, frothing and fuming, and deeply fissured gullies. Here a green upland timbered by ancient giant trees. Climbing plants, as long and as symmetrical as the rigging of an ocean-going ship,

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hang down from the branches or twine tenderly round the trunks. Over there on the slope, flowering shrubs in manifold splendour of flower and form.

Every four miles we change horses. Ever higher we climb into "the Blue Hills," so called because in spring-time carpets of blue flowers cover them.

In the higher altitudes eucalyptus and acacias betray the hand, conquering but always civilising, of the Englishman. Huge rhododendron trees in the decoration of trusses of pink flowers and rusty-coloured foliage delight the eye.

In the meantime darkness falls. We are at a height of more than 6000 feet. Distant lights already herald our near arrival at Ootacamund.

The residence of the Governor is closed during the winter. But Sir Arthur in the kindness of his heart had made arrangements for our accommodation at the Madras Hotel. The gong was already announcing dinner, and along with the other visitors we hastened to our labours.

Half curiously, half apathetically, the company of strangers receives us, and, reciprocating their sentiments, we ply our spoons. But the second course warms my blood. I am sitting next to an Englishwoman; she is beautiful, young and gracious, but a shadow of mourning overcasts her pretty

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features — a haze of crape over flowering roses. What is it that has overcast her peace of mind and saddened her face? How glad would my sympathetic soul be to raise the veil! Otherwise the company at dinner failed to thaw. Our British cousin likes a silent communion; his soul abhors the noisy interchange of meaningless words and phrases.

The meal sped in almost unbroken silence. We ate our way mechanically through the long bill of fare that promises so much and achieves so little—tinned fish, mutton, chicken, curry, sweets, cheese, and dessert: these are the stand-bys of an Anglo-Indian menu. The cooking is bereft of sap or savour, without variety and without flavour. English people cook, in the true sense of the word, with water only. No subtle salmi allures us; no soufflé smiles upon us; no chaud-froid tickles our palate. The same dish of savourless cauliflower and potatoes is served inexorably with every course of fish or meat. Pepper—the sole talisman of an Indian cook—pervades everything. And in dreary monotony the same dull dishes invariably furnish the feast, and, what is more, three times a day, in the hotel as well as in the private house, among rich and poor alike. If only the dinner marshals the greatest possible number of courses, the culinary ambitions of Anglo-

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India are appeased. Pepper and Worcester sauce supply the condiments.

But let us join the merry chase.

At seven o'clock in the morning the Governor's horses are brought round. I mount a tall, handsome waler. We have an hour's ride to the meet.

We trot over the rolling uplands under flowering bushes of jasmin, under flowering rhododendrons and ferns as tall as man. A light breeze stirs the scent of mignonette and heliotrope. What intoxicating air, so soft and bracing, so transparent that you might imagine the distant hills within arm's reach! Gigantic acacias and eucalyptus trees only partially hide the distant view over the splendid amphitheatre flooded by the clear morning light.

Twelve men in pink and one lady turn out at the meet. I recognised my neighbour at dinner of the previous evening. "So young and pretty, and a widow already," the Master told me. Two years before her husband had been thrown and killed in the hunting field here; but, in spite of everything, love of the chase always lured her back to the scene of her bereavement.

Soon the hounds pick up the scent of a jackal. They give tongue and follow barking, the field after them at a smart pace. We gallop up hill and down

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dale, over green, ever-green, lawns. There is no jumping, but the slopes are steep and slippery, and downhill the pace is very hot.

I commit myself to my clever waler. He knows the country, and he knows his business. The Australian stallion is well aware that you can only gallop down such smooth steep slopes perpendicularly. A slither and a slide at a breakneck pace—there is no pulling up, no check, no drawing rein. Often you expect to find yourself pitched over his head, or, up the slopes, on the point of turning a somersault, backwards. Fortunately my mount possessed a mane, and the beautiful Englishwoman's daring lead gave me the moral support I needed. Her face lights up. But the gleam of delight is only like the fugitive sunbeam that gilds the wing of a bird in flight.

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[Photo by Vernon & Co., Bombay

AN INDIAN VILLAGE

The glamour of the immemorial East

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CHAPTER V

HYDERABAD

Golconda! Aforetime the capital of the mightiest of the Maharatta kingdoms—once known throughout the world for its diamonds, and therefore until to-day proverbial for immeasurable wealth.

All that is left of Golconda to-day is only a heap of wreckage, a place of crumbling ruins crowning, like eagles' eyries, the tall, sheer chalk cliffs.

Lack of water and an unhealthy climate determined its inhabitants, towards the end of the sixteenth century, to desert their old capital. Eight miles further east rose Hyderabad—the residence of the Nizam to-day.

The state of the same name comprises the greater part of central Deccan, and equals the superficial area of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The number of its population—mainly Mohammedans—is estimated at about sixteen millions.

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Since the year 1818 Hyderabad — the Indian citadel of Islam—has forfeited its independence. At that time marauding bands, the Pindari, were laying the country waste, and afforded the English Government the welcome pretext for intervening in force to support the Nizam. Since then Anglo-Indian troops have garrisoned Secunderabad, not far from the capital. The "Hyderabad Contingent," in the heart of the Deccan, furnishes a base of some strategical importance to England.

Of the feudatory princes, as they are called, the Nizam is the first and the most powerful. He is master of most considerable financial and military resources, and its geographical position in the centre of the Peninsula contributes added importance to his state. Pessimists incline to the opinion that in given circumstances the issue of the fate of India itself may lie in the Nizam's hands.

But this supposition is belied by the fact that the great Indian Mutiny of 1857—even during the moments most unpropitious to England—in no way affected the attitude of the ruler of Hyderabad and of his people. Even if, however, it is legitimate to assume that the prince may still feel a little sore at the loss of his ancestors' suzerainty, he can scarcely be said to have vindicated the independence of his

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predecessors. As a strictly orthodox Mohammedan, the Nizam—and with him the great majority of his nobles and his people—stands in forefront of the coalition of co-religionists loyal to their faith as against the influence of the Western civilisation.

The whirligig of time itself is powerless to stir anyone who professes the creed of Islam; he is and remains the stubborn, unyielding representative of Asiatic fanaticism who refuses to compromise himself by admitting any discussion on the course of the latter-day evolution of things or to accept any trend of thought emanating from the infidel.

The Hindoos—together with the Mohammedans, the principal element of the population in India—offer less resistance to the advancement of European culture. More than a thousand years of oppression have, after all, made them more docile and more submissive to a foreign yoke, whereas the Moslem elements hitherto deemed themselves the conquerors, the rulers of the land.

Thanks to the kind introduction of Sir Arthur Havelock, in Hyderabad too I am the guest of the English representative. Mr Cobb in the most cordial fashion puts me up in his residency outside the boundaries of the city.

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Although my host is a bachelor, his establishment leaves nothing to be desired in the way of home comforts. You are hardly conscious of missing the feminine touch. And yet how indispensable does the Englishwoman make herself in India of all places! She is the guardian and the mainstay of hearth and home; she shares joy and sorrow with her husband; she is a loyally circumspect and intelligent helpmate. Unafraid and self-sacrificing, the woman of Anglo-India identifies herself with her husband's profession; carefully educated and well-informed, she maintains and lends savour to social life. Unselfishly, regardless of personal privations, she follows her husband to the remotest outposts; she shirks neither the discomforts of the climate nor the insecurity of life that obtains nowhere in more marked degree than in India. Here you are taking your pleasure—you are laughing, dancing, or hunting — among open or newly closed graves.

The seat of the Resident is of princely circumstance. Broad, parklike grounds enclose the palace, built in the Italian style.

Besides myself, Mr Cobb is entertaining a whole crowd of guests. I am puzzled how he finds it possible to put up so many visitors. The comfortable and smart tents, pitched in the park, offer an

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explanation of the miracle. As many tents as there are guests—quickly pitched and as quickly struck. In the Anglo-Indian's establishment the walls are as elastic as its hospitality.

Consonant to the status of the Nizam, the Residency of Hyderabad takes rank before all the rest of the English representatives accredited to native princes. These political agents are subordinate to the Viceroy, who in his turn is responsible to the Secretary of State for India.

Within the district entrusted to him it is the business of the Resident to safeguard the interests of the Viceregal government. It is his business to keep the princes up to the fulfilment of their treaty engagements, to keep an eye—with as little interference in the internal administration of affairs as may be—on the native ministers and officials, to temper grave abuses, and to exercise a certain measure of supervision over the domestic economy of the State. The Residents are watch-dogs and councillors; they are the eye, and, if need be, the arm, of the Government. At the same time they exercise jurisdiction over the Europeans living within the borders of their district, while the sovereign administers justice to his own subjects only.

Before 1818—that is to say before the overthrow

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of the Maharatta kingdom and the deposition of the Peshwar, whose states were incorporated into the Empire of British India—the East India Company negotiated with the then independent princes on terms of complete equality. To-day the Maharajahs are vassals of the English crown, and the true state of affairs was virtually acknowledged by them—albeit in silence—when in 1877 Queen Victoria assumed the title of Empress of India.

So these princes now rule in name only. On state occasions, it is true, they represent the chief of the State, and clothe themselves in sovereign pomp. They receive royal visits amid the display of Oriental splendour, and entertain Government officials or travellers of distinction lavishly. But, apart from this, the Indian princes, agreeably to their indolence of character, live, as a rule, inactive lives in peace and seclusion. Devoid of cares or ambitions, they spend or waste as much of the state revenues as may be allotted to them for pocket-money, vegetate on silken cushions, and at times complain of enlarged livers. But they have become more or less reconciled to their fate in the comforting assurance that British Government does not contemplate their dethronement. Herein lies an earnest for the maintenance of the internal peace of the Peninsula.

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As a rule, the Rajahs cheerfully endorse the decrees of the Residents. In the event of differences of opinion the last word is with the Viceroy.

By virtue of my relationship with the all-powerful authority of Hyderabad, I had no difficulty in paying a visit to the city and palace of the Nizam, which, as a general rule, are not very accessible. One of the prince's elephants conveys me about from place to place.

Hyderabad bears external evidence of its comparatively recent origin. Its Indo-Mauresque appearance reminds one of certain quarters of Cairo. A characteristic feature are the four towers of the Char Minar. In the heart of the city, at the point of intersection of the two main streets, they rise, incomparably graceful, from a mighty vault, and strain heavenwards in reckless slenderness. The architecture of the houses is monotonous; washed a dull red, two-storied, with green latticed window, there is tier after tier of them. But the kaleidoscopic, ever-shifting street scenes busy the eye with variety enough. Up and down, rich in colour, glowing in colours, the crowds drift and throng and elbow, on the sidewalks, in the gutters, on foot, on horseback, or on wheels. Men, women, and children; Hindoo and Mussulman; soldiers of Nizam, beggars,

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cripples, dervishes, and fakirs. Great and humble, even the merchants in the shops, carry arms.

Elephants — on their backs aristocrats in their red howdahs — divide the throng. Long strings of camels, one roped behind the other, add to the confusion. With necks outstretched and nostrils uplifted, these beasts stalk along with their idiotic expression and air of dignity, unperturbed by the congestion they are leaving for a column of covered ox-waggons in their wake. So I find time to take in these wondrous vehicles — kiosks on wheels. But heavy curtains of glaring colouring hide their interior.

"Ladies of rank," remarked my guide.

Thanks to the superior physical force of the elephant and to Mr Cobbs' talisman in the shape of a pass, the programme of my sight-seeing went on without interruption. It wound up with the Bara Dari palace, the former residence of Sir Salar Jung.

What visitor to Hyderabad has not heard the name of the Nizam's all-powerful minister? My guide described him as the Bismarck of India.

I wonder if he meant to flatter my patriotic vanity?

For thirty years Sir Salar Jung ruled these lands. In vain did the Nabobs strive to get rid of him.

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[Photo by Vernon & Co., Bombay

A PURDA

The bullock carriage of a lady of rank

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As early as the outbreak of the Mutiny of 1857, that sagacious statesman foresaw the victory of British supremacy. He declared in its favour, and thereby rendered England a substantial service. In grateful recognition thereof Mr Jung was knighted on the occasion of his subsequent visit to London, and for the rest of his life they left him in charge of the treasury and the executive. He devoted his attention to the former more particularly. Despite a yearly income of £120,000, at his death he left behind him debts to the tune of a million — this although his dealings had lain with the treasury of Golconda.

The day is drawing to its close. The setting sun warns us to turn homewards. Outside the gates of the city I climb a little hill to take leave of the unique panorama. The view seems unbounded —all round about the plain of the Deccan, undulating, cleft by gullies, and strewn with low boulders. The mists of twilight shroud the ruined city like white cerecloths. Good night, Golconda!

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CHAPTER VI

FROM HYDERABAD TO BOMBAY

"WADI! Wadi! Change for Bombay," the guard called out to me. A horde of naked Indians was already falling upon the light luggage in my carriage as under: 1 tin box about a yard and a half long, 2 capacious kit-bags, 2 trunks, 3 gun-cases, 1 cartridge-box, 3 solar topees, 1 luncheon basket, 1 roll of bedding, 1 washhand basin, cooking utensils, umbrellas and sticks.

"Take things as they come," is the watchword of Europeans travelling in India. The compartments are often like a showroom. I have seen Englishmen taking whole tents in with them, and chests and trunks so big that manual strength only availed to heave them in with an effort.

At Wadi junction the Hyderabad line joins the great Madras-Bombay system.

It was eleven o'clock at night. Up to time, by

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way of a change, the Bombay train ran in. I pointed out a carriage to my army of coolies. "Get the stuff in!" I shouted to them, for the guard was hanging about the door doubtfully. "Get on! What's the matter?" I join them and look in. The compartment seems to be full. But it isn't: only one of the beds is tenanted, but the three others, as well as all the rest of the available floor space, are occupied by the "light articles" of the sleeper. Still, I have to get in. All the other carriages are full to overflowing. The guard is fussing to be off. My luggage is shot in, and settles down in wild confusion. But where am I to lay my tired head?

I summon up courage to pluck the sleeper's sleeve, and accompany this furtive action with words of apology and condolence.

"Then why wake me up?" he answered brutally, but with crushing logic, turned on his shoulder, and went to sleep again.

Then at length the *furor teutonicus* stirred within me. My determination to clear a couch and my action in forwarding the articles lying on it to their sleeping owner by express were simultaneous. Nor was it unsuccessful; a spare Englishman promptly disencumbered himself of his rugs to rid the couch.

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I had selected of its unwarrantable ballast in the twinkling of an eye.

Not a word of apology escaped his lips, nor a sound of resentment either. After all, it struck him as a matter of course that I should enforce my rights without ado.

The Briton likes straightforward demeanour. Our cousins have no use for empty phrases, and that is one reason why they are so pleasant to live and to travel with. Without referring to the incident at all, we breakfasted amicably together on the following morning, and spent the remaining four-and-twenty hours of our common journey in untroubled intercourse.

The tableland of the Deccan we crossed in the course of the day lacks all scenic charm: a plain as far as the eye can reach, studded with innumerable patches of low rock. The country is altogether treeless. Here and there are paddy-fields, a wretched hut, a few cattle, horribly lean, in keeping with the parched soil. The population in rags and unkempt. What a contrast with the districts England herself administers!

Towards evening we reach Poona, the summer residence of the Governor of Bombay. The Indian Sans-souci affords, it is true, as my travelling com-

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panion observed, no surcease from the cares of state and government, but its lofty situation is a prophylactic against fever and the insufferable enervating sultriness of the climate of Bombay.

A picturesque tangle of wooded heights, the landscape here reveals all the allurement of tropical mountain vegetation. Carefully tilled fields slide past us, farms hidden behind clumps of huge bamboos. The villages veil themselves coquettishly in foliage and shade, like rustic beauties hiding their faces behind their aprons.

The air here is fresh and bracing. "On the other side of that plain lies Kirki," remarks my English fellow-traveller, pointing towards the west. Historically it is not without interest. There Mountstuart Elphinstone in 1818 wiped out the combined forces of the last Peshwa and overthrew the mighty kingdom of the Maharattas. Thus the battlefield of Kirki finished off the work of General Wellesley, later on Duke of Wellington, who in 1799, at the storming of Seringapatam, had made an end of the notorious Tippoo Sahib and therewith barred the road to the south of India in the face of the Mahomedan invaders.

Kirki and Seringapatam are in fact important milestones on the path of fame that with changeful

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fortune but ultimate success led England to empire over India.

On the following morning we at length draw near our destination. The railroad now plunges headlong down to the plains, winds along perpendicular cliffs and sheer precipices, dives through numerous tunnels, to reach the shore of the Arabian Gulf at last. The scorching glow of the atmosphere and the tropical luxuriance of nature leave us no room to doubt that we have left the comparatively cool Deccan behind us.

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CHAPTER VII

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

BOMBAY! The Bombay far sounded in history, once the dowry the Infanta Catherine of Portugal brought to her consort Charles II. of England.

But the king soon bartered the dowry of his royal bride away. He leased the island town to the East India Company for a yearly charge of one hundred pounds sterling.

The little settlement rapidly developed into the centre of European trade in the far East, and therewith into the chief town of the English possessions in India. Surat, on the other hand—hitherto the commercial metropolis on the coast of Gudsharat, where the Britons had landed in 1614 to open up negotiations with the Great Mogul—lost importance in proportion to her rival's progress.

From Bombay the daring merchant adventurers established lucrative connections in every direction.

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They opened up trade with the coast of Coromandel, and within a short space of time Madras was playing a no less important part in the east of the Peninsula than Bombay herself in the west.

Nor did the fertile land of Bengal escape the covetous attentions of English merchants for long. A concession obtained from the Emperor Shah Jehan authorised them to found a town of the same name on the river Hoogli.

But Hoogli was destined to be the last stage of their hitherto pacific expansion. The suspicions and jealousy of France succeeded at length in directing the attention of Indian rulers to the probable ambitions of England and in troubling the relationships between the native princes—more especially between the overlord of Delhi—and the British intruders. The white settlers of Hoogli had to fly and to take refuge in Calcutta, which lay nearer the court where, by the mediation of the Imperial Viceregent, protection was assured them.

Never before had the power of the great Moguls seemed more unassailably established. The foreigners had to eat humble pie; The shining Light of the World that sheds its countenance on all nations, of its unexhaustible mercy and magnanimity gave them leave to go about their business as heretofore.

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But it was only the last flicker of the might of Delhi. The English soon felt strong enough to exchange the peaceful staff of the wayfarer for the sword of the conqueror. The bloody war in the south against Tippoo Sahib, the successful inroads on the kingdom of the Maharattas, the heroic struggle with the French, are the prelude to the overthrow of the Great Mogul rule. On its collapse follow the occupation of the Punjab and the subjugation of the savage mountain races in the north and east. Only the ice-bound glacier world of the Himalayas, only the red-hot desert oceans of Central Asia, were able to call halt to the patriotic heroism and the adventurous enterprise of Great Britain's sons. So after tireless struggles, after more than a hundred years of self-sacrificing bloody work, the stupendous plans of an Alexander and of a Napoleon were at length realised.

For the Asiatic, too, the possession of India had from time immemorial been the most coveted prize of political power. Their feats of arms in India furnished the proudest boast of Jinges Khan, of Timour, and of Nadir Shah. But while those daring conquerors only partially succeeded in bringing the Peninsula under their power, England forced the whole vast congeries of territories south of the Himalayas under her sceptre.

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Peopled since the beginning of historical tradition by nations of alien race, divided by language and by religion alike, split up into innumerable states and principalities, Hither India was smelted together into a single compact World-empire.

With the union of these diverse countries under the Union Jack began the liberation of the common people, enslaved by priestcraft and suppressed by force. Simultaneously the rigid caste system of the populace, a system buttressed by religious tenets, underwent some compromise and change. English suzerainty raised the lower strata of the population, groaning under universal contempt, back and up to the level of common humanity. Renascence from petrified traditions, from stagnating passivity, and from unfruitful inertness to new and active life signalises the British era.

Therewith, in its moral aspects too, English statescraft won a brilliant triumph, in which the violence done to Indian rulers finds its moral justification.

No less inestimable are the services which Great Britain has rendered to European knowledge. The rich storehouse of Indian languages, history, and archæology was now thrown open to the exploitation of the scholarship of the world. It is to England's

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suzerainty in India alone that we owe the opportunity of bringing its adjoining kingdoms of Central Asia within the reach of thorough exploration and of making Europe acquainted with the conditions of those remotest corners of the earth.

The fabric of this Indian empire that now stands alone in the history of nations was begun with wise foresight by a merchant's guild, was built up dauntlessly sword in hand, and was upheld by the enthusiasm and support of the whole Motherland. And if the mailéd fist of those reckless conquistadores, who without a moment's thought put their lives to the hazard, may not always have done its work in velvet gloves, their honourable valour in war and their far-seeing measures in peace exonerate these doughty champions of England's hegemony from any overharsh verdict at the bar of posterity.

For of a surety it was no barren bloodshed, such as has only too often disgraced the history of Europe, that drenched the soil of India. The seed, forced into its blood-soaked furrow with fire and sword, has borne imperishable fruits to the profit of humanity, and on the field of heroic deeds of arms has risen a monument of peace, outlasting time, overshadowing worlds — the boundary stone of Western civilisation.

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What a fate would have been the destiny of the millions of India's populace, what the future of the Peninsula itself, but for the joyous spirit of adventurous enterprise that inspired those vikings of the sixteenth century! What another picture, maybe, would our earth present to-day had not the English in India learnt how to serve that apprenticeship in colonisation that has qualified them to carry the banner of civilisation the whole world over!

For even though the contemporary world may follow the expansion of the British World-empire with a jaundiced eye, if impotent envy indicts the Englishman of political self-seeking and of insatiable lust of conquest, begrudging jealousy itself will hardly dare to belittle his fame as the pioneer of civilisation, or to deny him the merit that the blessings of civilisation have followed on the heels of his occupation.

By her conquest of India England has, beyond all cavil, accomplished a work whose benefits are to the profit, direct or indirect, of all nations, civilised and savage alike.

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CHAPTER VIII

BOMBAY

How many and what precious memories stirred in me as I drove through the familiar streets of Bombay on my way to Malabar Point!

During my first sojourn in India, seventeen years ago, it was the residence of the Governor that on my arrival had opened its hospitable doors to me. At that time Lord and Lady Harris were in residence in Bombay, kindly cordial folk, who received my German friends and me with genuine English hospitality. Gratefully did I recall my kind hosts of earlier days. How they enjoyed our unsophisticated admiration for the tropics! Lady Harris and her friend Miss Croft, delighted in our accounts of our experiences on the voyage, in which Mrs Myra Andrews, a charming American, played the leading part. And, thinking of the daughter of Virginia, the object of our universal admiration, all the unsophisti-

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cated bright impressions of that first sea voyage on board the *Malva* came back to me—careless days under the sun-screen of the little P. and O. steamer, of tropical nights, of the love-lorn moon, of glittering stars, and of the heaven in our hearts.

The memory of another old friend of these days comes to welcome me back to Bombay—of gallant old Lord de Vesci, for whose kind offices I still have the pleasantest recollections. I had the opportunity of renewing my acquaintance with the chivalrous old nobleman when we were both the guests of the Viceroy and Lady Lansdowne at Calcutta, and I shall never forget his many acts of kindness. I wonder where my greetings will find him now? Or can it be that my gallant old friend has by this time joined the great majority?

There is another friend I miss, at whose hands I received signal favours, though at the time I am speaking of he was wont to dispense them with sovereign impartiality from his perambulator. But, as the son and heir of the Governor and Lady Harris, Totsey was a personage of the very greatest consideration. Well, I suppose, that Eton or Harrow has claimed him, and that by this time he is too grown-up to care to be reminded of the days when in short frocks he helped to make a stranger and

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sojourner feel at home under his father's roof. *Eheu! fugaces!*

Even the reek of Bombay makes me feel at home —a blend of musk, of spices, and of the smouldering sandal-wood they burn at prayer and festivals. As then, the fantastic traffic of this city, half Indian, half European, fascinated me to-day with the garish ebb and flow of its population, perhaps the most variegated in hue of the world. The human skin reveals itself here in every shade and tint, and the variety of its garb beggars every colour of the palette.

The fascination of Bombay lies in its diversity—the diversity of its landscape, of its street scenes, of its population. One would like to have a hundred eyes to be able to take in its exotic, kaleidoscopic *va-et-vient.* Talk of scenes from the *Thousand and One Nights!* The Orient, its entire fairylike splendour, and alongside of it sober businesslike Europe; the drab commonplaceness of the West rubbing shoulders with these teeming crowds drunk with colour and adventure. Bombay is at one and the same time pan-Asiatic and cosmopolitan—a melting pot of races and religions.

You can tell at the outset that this metropolis is a daughter of Old England. The features of Bombay bewray her history—a history that is part and parcel

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of those title-deeds to fame which Britain's constructive work claims on Indian soil. Bombay is no mushroom growth of yesterday: her growth comprises more than two centuries—a gauge of the expansion of Anglo-Indian world empire.

In Bombay the wealth and luxury of the East flourish side by side with that of the West, nor have the misery and the vices of either hemisphere spared this commercial metropolis. On every hand the power of Vishnu, the preserver, and of Siva, the destroyer, struggle for mastery. If brilliant industrial enterprise and keen business development promote the prosperity of Bombay, abuses of the most divergent kinds jeopardise the very conditions of its continuity. About every tenth native is condemned to death by plague, against which medical science hitherto fights in vain; Bombay, the city of Parsee millionaires, is at the same time the city of the plague.

Who could without a silent shudder pass the public burning places of its hapless victims, embosomed in their encircling Paradise? Who does not recognise the savour, typical here, of blistering human flesh mingling with the fragrance of tropical vegetation again?

Oh, glorious, fruitful India! Everything in this wondrous land seems to be of surplus values to the

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verge of the unreal, to be expressed in superlatives only. Here on every hand contrasts clash and jar. Teeming fertility gives place to barren wilderness; months of complete drought alternate with spells of incessant downpour. The tides of the Indian Ocean, smooth as glass, are stirred from peaceful slumber in the glowing sunshine by raging cyclones that whip the waves house-high under skies black as pitch. The more challenging the garish splendour of the flower, the more scanty its fragrance; the more alluring the fruit, the more insipid its flavour. Asiatic barbarity rubs shoulders with the riper culture of Europe. The Pariah's wretched hut of leaves and garbage cheek by jowl with the Nabob's palace of pink marble. Dearth and plenty, shade and light—yet the magic spell of India over all.

The face of Bombay changes with its distance from the roadstead. First seaport, then commercial city, then the hub of politicals and officialdom. Further out the city becomes a garden. At our feet the glassy bay of the Arabian Sea. Along the beach in (so it seems) endless vistas, stretch green lawns, shady gardens, playgrounds for recreation and pastimes. An avenue of glorious palm trees intersects the idyllic landscape and further on climbs the Malabar hills on the further shore of the gulf. On

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the topmost summit here flies the standard of the King; on Malabar Point his representative, the Governor of Bombay, is in residence.

At the foot of the palace lies a town of villas, Malabar Hill. Pretty houses, large and small, simple and splendid, half hidden under the wealth of foliage of the prodigal Nature of the tropics, earmark the quarter of exalted officialdom. The judges and consuls, the commercial magnates of the Presidency of Bombay, have established their household gods here. Everyone who is any one lives on Malabar Hill.

How radiant is the earth here, steeped with the inexhaustible sap of supernormal propagative forces! You can enjoy God's glorious world in full draughts here—if indeed not without a sense of gentle melancholy.

How shall we be able to endure our autumn with the fall of the leaf after the springtide roses of Bombay?

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CHAPTER IX

THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

Captain Gray, one of the Governor's courteous A.D.C.'s, received me on my arrival at Malabar Point. He was in full uniform, an indication that he was on duty for the day. "We are going to tiffin at once," Gray remarked. "Come as you are. The guests are already assembling." I sped with all haste up the steps into the reception room. Government House seemed to me unchanged—all but its tenants.

But no! I recognise an old patron, Colonel Tudor Owen, the Governor's military secretary, who held the same appointment as long ago as 1891. To my delight one or two old acquaintances appear: Dorothy, Lady Cantelupe, a well-known figure in London society, and her husband, Captain Jeffreys. Ladies and gentlemen in the lightest of attire, flannels or pongee silk. Also I soon make some new friends in the persons of the Governor's private secretary

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and his charming wife, Mrs du Boulay. Nobody could help being made to feel quite at his ease under the sunny spell of Mrs du Boulay's society; both to her and to her husband, who, I believe, is still Sir George Clarke's secretary, I owe a debt of gratitude for many kindnesses received.

One or two natives, too, high officials, are among the guests.

His Excellency has not put in an appearance yet. According to etiquette he does not appear until all his invited guests have assembled. The Governor in his representative capacity is a personage of importance, for he represents the King, and in the colonies the King exercises a great moral power. Attachment to the dynasty and a well-developed sense of loyalty invest the representative of the sovereign with his significance. Endowed with tact, patience and capacity, he is able—in spite of an almost republican-democratic constitution—to call the tune at critical moments.

The Governors of Bombay and Madras are subordinate to the Viceroy in Calcutta. The latter is authorised to intervene should Imperial interests demand it. In that event the official Chief refuses to give his assent to the bill; he interposes his veto, and reports to the Secretary of State for India.

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The English Cabinet then promulgates the final decision.

My neighbour at table is Lady Adela Cochrane. She is officiating as hostess in the place of the absent mistress of the house. I find an Indian notable on my left. He does full justice to the fleshpots of Government House, and, like all Indians in Western environment, he does not talk much. But in form and manner the Asiatic shows himself entirely European.

I wonder if he feels it? The racial cleavage is, after all, too great ever to be bridged.

Lord Lamington has a pleasant word for every one of his guests. A most agreeable host, he is accounted a very welcome superior. The Governor is equally popular among the Englishmen and the natives of his province.

My neighbour on my left engages me in conversation on the subject of Lord Curzon, whose retirement he heartily regrets. Although it is some time ago since Curzon doffed the Viceregal purple, his name is still, as it always was, on all men's lips in India. For has he not laid the foundations of that "Greater India," left his mark on the modern era of the Empire, and traced the new roads of Anglo-Indian policy with foresight akin to genius?

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But Lord Lamington's hospitable board is hardly the place at which to discuss this topic. Moreover, tiffin, quickly served, is soon over. Without formality of any kind, we hurry out of the sultry dining-room to enjoy coffee and the sea breezes outside on the veranda.

A few minutes later his Excellency has disappeared unobserved. Every one follows his example without any fuss or to-do, without leave-taking and bowing and scraping. Go your own way! that's what I like about the Englishman.

Gray accompanies me to my apartments — four airy walls they call the visitors' bungalow. They are the same rooms that housed me years ago. Then I had my travelling companions, Baron Hermann and Count Frederick Spee, for company. I wonder where they may be lodged to-day!

I sit down at my writing-table to send them a picture post-card. I also write some letters to my dear ones at home. For the morrow is mail day for home—an important day in foreign lands.

One letter after another I wring out of my increasing sense of fatigue. Although you go to work in your shirt sleeves and unbraced down to the last garment, the exertion of penmanship remains overwhelming. Have they any idea in the cold North

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of these torrid tortures? I am not writing under the palm trees without paying the penalty.

At my elbow the grey, black-pointed squirrel is up to its pranks. Where don't you come across it in India? With the utmost confidence it slips away between your feet on the road until you are afraid of having done the jolly little beast an injury. But a second later it is already swinging from the topmost branch of some giant of the forest, and makes fun of you with its shrill call. Then it goes on with its acrobatic performances, all in the same breath.

All round me from the impenetrable foliage rises a buzzing and a hum, as of thousands of voices in gay festivity. They are the winged population of the tropics—sapphire-green beetles, innumerable insects singing their hymn of praise. A bush in the flaming red splendour of its blossoms stretches out its branches to within my airy lodging. Cloudless and blue is the vault of heaven overhead. A sea of light floods the world about me. The swooning air is heavy with heady scents. The wood as in a fairy world—dreamlike, unearthly. A wondrous sense of well-being fills the Northerner amid these bright, gay colours of the tropical world. You only want to look on and dream.

But suddenly a crow breaks in on my peaceful

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reverie; quite close to me he dives to the ground to make off with the provender he has lost no time in annexing. The black scoundrel is ubiquitous in India, in town and country, in the garden and on the fields, on the coolie's hut and in the Viceroy's palace. The crow is part and parcel of Indian landscape. He drops down outside your door, and, if you do not move, in he walks. In the grey dawn he wakes the sleeper with his harsh, discordant croak; he breaks in upon your communings with nature, disturbs your reveries. He is sacred, and the patron of men and things. Everything is his. He demolishes the fresh corpses of the Parsees in the Towers of Silence, and half-incinerated bodies drifting down the sacred Ganges. He robs the children of the toys they have dropped, and soils the book we hold in our hand. He lives on garbage and dead bodies, and scavenges town and country of all filth. I wonder what would they do without him in the Peninsula, where there is never any drainage anywhere, and other sanitary appliances are conspicuous by their absence!

Here's long life to the crow!

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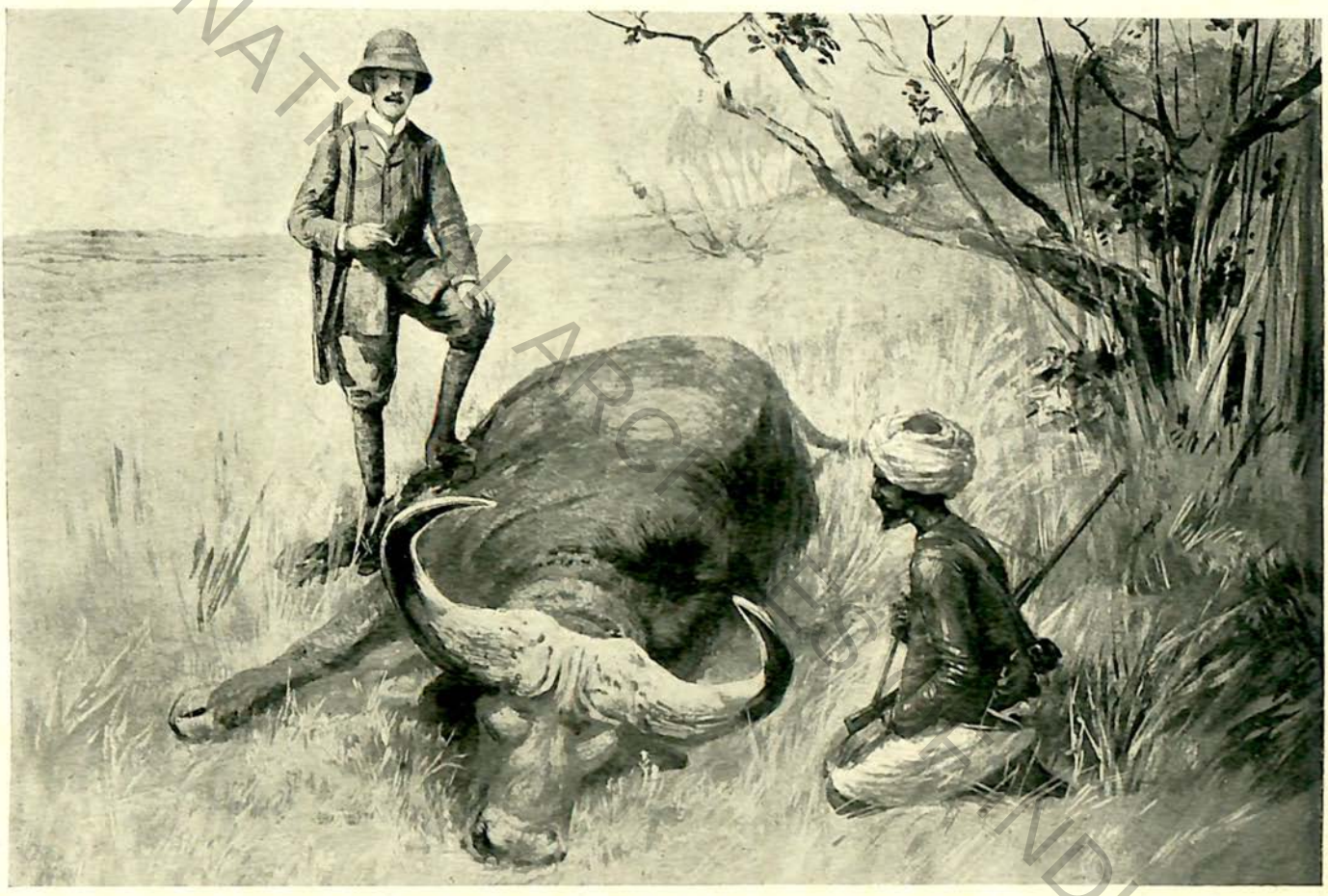

SPORT IN INDIA

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CHAPTER X

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF BOMBAY

In Bombay gaieties follow on the heels of one another, yet without any sense of sameness. Lady Adela Cochrane invites me to escort her at five o'clock to take tea at the Yacht Club.

We drive down to the town in a dogcart. The charming mistress of the house steers the trap with her own fair hands. I am lost in admiration for her skill. For it isn't easy to skirt round the many obstacles—for the most part incalculable—of traffic in Indian streets.

The fair-way is swarming with pedestrians, with beasts of burden, horsemen, cabs, carriages, and motors. Great and small are gadding about. During the day every one who can stays indoors; from nine o'clock till five sun and dust reign supreme; but now every one is hurrying out of doors to get a breath of air. The sun is already beginning

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to set, and the palm trees are throwing longer shadows. The atmosphere seems a little cooler; at anyrate a slight draught encourages the delusion. Smart carriages with occupants clad in light-coloured raiment, Europeans and natives, roll past. The places set apart for riding or games awake to life in real earnest and gay activity. During the hours of evening the whole of India gives itself up to outdoor pastimes. How would Englishmen have been able to accomplish their mighty works of colonisation without their sports?

For generations they have been bracing body and mind in strict, untiring training in the practice of sports that have made them hard, and have given them their capacity for resistance against changes and chances of fate as well as against the enervating climate of their tropical colonies.

In the comparatively cool garden of the Yacht Club you would hardly believe that you are still in India. Only the dark-skinned, white-clad native servants represent the far East.

Ladies in the newest fashions stroll about the green lawns or drink tea and other refreshing liquids at little tables on the veranda, celebrated all the world over, which commands the blinking surface of the harbour. A military band is playing the

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latest tunes. You hear merry voices and bright laughter everywhere. The fair sex, for the most part, affects light summer frocks; the men have exchanged their solar topees for straw hats or caps. The scene, as a whole reminiscent of the Riviera or Ostend, is one of the utmost gaiety and animation. Only the marble pallor of the ladies, more especially of the young girls—one effect of a tropical climate—strikes one as exotic.

But the interval of recreation and of the refreshing coolness passes, alas! only too quickly. Almost at the same hour at all seasons of the year darkness sets in—about seven o'clock—and almost without any transition stage day passes into night.

Every one goes home now, to dine in oppressively hot rooms, where only the punkah makes existence tolerable. It does its bare duty, but nothing more. The menu is, it is true, of many courses, and sounds French, but you eat your dinner mechanically, sip your Hock or Heidsieck unconsciously, and carry on conversation in muffled accents.

The relief is general when the ritual of dinner has been appeased, and every one is at haste to seek some method of keeping cool out of doors — without finding one. For in the meanwhile even the breeze that was perceptible during the day has

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died away; it has, if it be possible, become more sultry still. At eleven o'clock the party breaks up. But it is still too hot to sleep.

I whistle for a cab and shout "Grant Road" to the driver. We pass Munlader's Tank, drive down Abdul Rahman Street, through the Bendi Bazaar, and at length reach Grant Road, the pleasure-haunt *par excellence* for the native town. Here the typical life of the *Arabian Nights* obtains. The narrow, dimly lighted, dirty, unsavoury, dusty street swarms with folk. Howling, shouting, groaning, the gaily coloured tangle of humanity rolls past me unchecked. Wave upon wave flows past, a hurrying flood-tide of human passions. The coachman has to drive at walking pace, and at length pulls up. You alight and mingle with the throng—the rustling, living mass which ebbs and flows, incessantly, without aim or object, all through the livelong night. A strange sight, like a masquerade or a carnival.

But, in spite of this seeming inextricable confusion, law and order prevails. Guardians of the peace rarely show themselves; only a single white policeman stands at the corner of Bendi Bazaar, a slim young Englishman in kharki kit and helmet. In silent sympathetic interest he watches the flood of humanity speeding past. Bobby is conscious of his

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white superiority, but he does not rub it in. His presence is enough!

All the houses open on to the street; their inhabitants squat in the doorways, gossiping, eating, drinking, laughing and making merry. It is only late at night that the Indians seem to wake up. You only rarely see women, and yet they are playing the principal part here.

So these are the enchantments of the *Arabian Nights*! "Once, and never again," the stranger says to himself, and is glad to find his cab once more, to be borne away with all despatch out of the chaotic symposium of voices of this human ant-hill.

But it is still too hot to seek one's couch under stuffy mosquito curtains. For a long time yet we lie at our ease at home in the comfortable deck-chairs over our whisky-and-soda, smoking and listening to the Indian night.

What a many-stringed distant orchestra! Human noises of all kinds, the monotonous mumble of priests at prayers, the love-lorn songs of the nautch girls, the dull beat of the fakir's drum. In between crickets chirp their metallic song from a thousand throats; crows croak; dogs bark; monkeys play their tricks; and from time to time the doleful howl

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of the jackal, piercing one's very marrow, rises above all other sounds. Millions of glow-worms illumine the darkness. The night is already far spent, when at length a cool breath of air begins to temper the tropical sultriness, and the feathery bamboos whisper, "To bed, to bed."

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CHAPTER XI

THE INDO-GERMAN COLONY

"A GERMAN tailor desires to pay his respects," was the announcement Paul made to me when he brought me my breakfast on the following morning. The poor tailor Sahib was in sore straits, and was hoping for some assistance from the German Count.

Well, how can a tailor expect to do good business in a country whose inhabitants for the most part wear no clothes at all?

So I receive Herr Arnim Muller—his card had already shed the two dots over the "u." To my astonishment he greets me in the vernacular of home. What a miracle! A German in a foreign land who talks German! I should have been better prepared for Sanscrit. I recompense his fealty to his father-land by a small order. The worthy German complains of bad trade and the want of solidarity of his compatriots. His wife, too, had deserted him.

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Faithless Thusnelda! Muller frequently garnished his speech with tags of English misapplied. How fond Germans are of investing themselves with a foreign veneer!

Strange! We have indeed invented gunpowder, but not national pride: the prophet is without honour in his own country. A thoroughly German proverb!

Poor knight of the needle, compatriot of mine, thy craft does not avail thee even in a foreign land!

But, as I was able to ascertain from other sources, our compatriots in Bombay are of good repute, thanks to their thoroughness; and statistics further throw a flattering light on German energy and craftsmanship, which find their recognition in the important share they claim in world markets of India.

So at last—after centuries of toil and struggle—the German spirit of enterprise had worried through to hardly-won success, although our commercial pioneers had had to dispense with all State support whatsoever, all patronage from above.

At the outset the scheme of the Great Elector for the foundation of a German East India Company only enlisted the interest of the Emperor Leopold I. to a very languid degree. Entrusted to the hands of a priest, the whole matter was therewith dead and buried. The Trading Company of Ostend, which,

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called into being later, was to promote the expansion of German trade under Imperial patronage, never came to anything. It was wrecked in the conclusion of the Pragmatic Sanction.

Even a Frederick the Great saw himself compelled to give up his undertakings overseas. Spleen and jealousy, in conjunction with the warlike activity of the great king, brought about the collapse of the Trading Company of Bengal he had founded.

Under how much more favourable auspices, on the other hand, was the English East India Company founded! Mutually satisfactory relationships soon developed between it and the House of Stuart. Charles II. and James II. lent the development of the enterprise the light of their countenance, and took no offence at the gifts proffered them.

Then the decay of empire of the Moguls beginning about 1717, served to promote England's policy in India. British influence in the Peninsula became ever stronger. Gradually, it is true, the competition of rivals began to make itself felt in India's borders. Almost all the Western states, not even with the exception of the smallest, aspired to a share in commerce between the world of Asia and Europe, when once it was opened up, and to the treasures of India.

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But how could they prevail in the long run against Great Britain's skilful statecraft, that soon succeeded in diverting the attention of Europe back to the Old World? And while the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and its princes frittered away their best strength in religious wars and inglorious squabbles at home, in the end only France was left behind as England's sole competitor in the Indian arena. Out of that duel to the death the Briton emerged victorious. Keenly envied it may be, but unmolested, he now laid the foundations of his Indian World-empire.

But so far as the peaceful competition of trade and commerce in the Peninsula is concerned, German enterprise and German industry have of late achieved unexpected triumphs. What Austria and Prussia failed to effect in the past centuries, German merchants have, thanks to the initiative of Emperor William II., brought about to-day.

To-day the German name is of good repute all over India. We find "Made in Germany" on the Indian market, in the west and the east, from tropical Ceylon to the snow-clad Himalayas.

"Made in Germany" everywhere; and, what is more, not only on the cheaper class of goods.

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CHAPTER XII

THE TOWERS OF SILENCE

THERE are certain obligations which the inquiring globe-trotter cannot escape. You can't go to Constantinople without seeing the Sultan; nor to Japan without climbing the Fuji Yama. I will not leave Bombay without seeing the Towers of Silence —that is, as far as profane eyes are permitted to behold them.

A splendid road, fringed by palm trees, runs up Malabar Hill to the summit, where a mysterious little gate bears the words, "No admission."

Under a glowing sun the landscape reveals the whole wealth of its tropical splendour here. Butterflies hover over the calyxes of the flowers, blending their tones of gold and purple into the colour scheme. Rustling softly a light breeze stirs the palm leaves.

On one side gentle undulating lines of rolling hills; on the other, in most telling contrast, steep,

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precipitous, rocky cliffs. At our feet lies Bombay—the harbour—the sea. The view ranges free over the unending blue to where, on the horizon, islands lie afloat on the waters and seem to hold the magnificent bay in their embrace. A panorama you can never forget.

In Government House I had made the acquaintance of a prominent Parsee. I owe my admission through the forbidden gate to Mr Framjee Karaka. A fairy garden opens out. Exotic shrubs in unimaginable wealth of blossom—splashes of gleaming colour on the wide expanses of lawn. Shimmering foliage of every shade. The most secluded solitude consecrated peacefulness. It seems as if the crowns of the palm trees were irradiate in the light of eternity. An air of sublime solemnity, as if Nature herself were celebrating high mass in this place of death, where the earthly pilgrimage of all Parsees ends. Only the beat of a vulture's wing breaks the breathless stillness; it comes from the Towers of Silence.

Hidden deep in the twilight of a grove of palm trees lies the mysterious place of death. There the dead bodies are laid. The towers are open from above—only the heavens gaze into them.

At a respectful distance we stand still. All

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around vultures and crows are perching in black lumps on the branches near us, motionless, preening their dirty plumage. They are waiting for their human meal.

A funeral procession approaches. On an iron bier kinsmen and friends bear all that is mortal of the deceased. Like dark clouds the hungry birds circle round. Their hoarse croaking fills the air with discord.

Immediately behind the bier walk two bearded men, whose office it is to lay the dead body in its last resting-place. A long train of fellow-worshippers follows, one and all in white robes. After a short halt in front of two white dogs—they are supposed to establish the identity of the deceased—the two bearded mourners do their office. No one else is admitted to the tower—except the birds which now, amid hideous croaking, alight on it clumsily. Soon they have done their office. Time and sun will transmute the last remnants to dust.

I am only an ear-witness; the gruesome impression of what goes on unseen is all the more vivid.

Zoroaster, the prophet of the Parsees, ordained that elements should be kept free of all impurity. Contact with a dead body is desecration. Even the two bearded men — the lowest of their caste — do

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not touch the bodies with their bare hands, only with tongs.

The human corpse may not be burnt, because it would make the fire unclean; nor may it be buried, so as not to defile the earth. It may not be given over to the waters any more than it may be left to rot under the open sky, because neither air nor water may be rendered unclean. By being devoured by birds it passes from one organism to another without coming into contact with the elements, and the great prophet's word is furthermore fulfilled: "Death shall unite rich and poor." The mortal remains of the millionaire as of the poorest beggar, stripped of all earthly coverings, become without distinction the vultures' prey.

Close to the towers rises a temple of Cyclopic structure. Here the sacred fire, which the first fugitives of the creed brought with them from Persia, is kept alive.

My companion explained the religious tenets of his compatriots to me. The Parsees emphatically repudiate the accepted assumption that they worship the elements. It is true that they offer up prayers and adoration to the sun and to the fire, but they both only stand in their eyes as the visible symbols of the invisible Deity. Ormuz, the creator and pre-

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server of the world, the first source of light and of all good, is—so Zoroaster teaches—like unto eternity of time and space. Beside him, Ahriman, the dark embodiment of evil, rules the universe. In the continuous fight of light with darkness it is the duty of the faithful to promote the good by works of charity, of neighbourly love and honesty, to work for the victory of the light by purity of thought, word, and deed. Zoroaster ordains diligence in the exercise of prayer which mortals, unceasingly exposed to the temptations of the Evil One, need for the strengthening of their purpose. God is the conception of brightness, of shining splendour, according to His word unto the prophet: "My light is embodied in all that shines."

Therefore the faithful say their prayers turned towards the fire or towards the sun. Fire they count the noblest and most beneficent of God's gifts. In its stainless purity they worship the gleaming symbol of the Deity himself, and the acrid scent of burning sandal-wood streams unceasingly heavenwards from their places of worship.

Through all the changes of their fortunes which plunged them from the height of their greatest power to the depths of humiliation, the Parsees preserved the sacred fire. Until the fourth century before

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Christ their rule in Persia flourished—that mighty empire which their ancestors had built up, whose vast expanse extended from the Ægean Sea to the Indian Ocean and was watered by the Euphrates and Tigris, by the Jaxartes, the Oxus, the Nile, and the Indus. Then the Persians, who had so often menaced Greece, had themselves to bow under the Grecian yoke. For six centuries they groaned under alien rule, oppressed and debarred from the exercise of their religious rites. Under the dynasty of the Sassanides Persia rose to renewed splendour; but it succumbed to the invasion of Arab hordes on the battle of Nahavand, where Jazdezard, the last of the Sassanides, in the year 641 of our era, lost his throne and his kingdom in battle against the lieutenant of the Caliph Omar.

The fanatic adherents of Islam—the Koran in one hand and the scimitar in the other—left the conquered no choice except the one or the other. Thus the religion of Zoroaster was almost completely extirpated in Persia. Only scattered adherents of the creed were able to safeguard their faith in the mountains of Khorassan. But even these remote desert fastnesses did not afford the fire-worshippers lasting sanctuary against their Mohamedan persecutors. The island of Ormuz in the Persian Gulf

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offered the homeless remnant a refuge. But here too they found no abiding city, and, faced by the alternatives, to leave Ormuz or to abjure their faith, they took up the pilgrim's staff anew.

They sought asylum in the land of the Hindoos, landing first at Diu, a little island on the north-west coast of India. After subsequent wanderings they reached Saujan, where they enjoyed protection and security until the Mohamedan invasion under Ali Khan in the twelfth century brought about the fall of Hindoo rule there. Robbed of their homesteads, and wandering about unresting, the fugitives now bore the sacred fire from place to place. At length they settled at Surat, where they first came into contact with Europeans. With the formation of Western trading companies the Parsees rose to consideration and importance. The Dutch, the Portuguese, and more particularly the English, made use of them as interpreters, agents, and brokers. Sober, honest, thrifty, and endowed with peculiar qualifications for success as bankers and traders, they soon became indispensable to the Europeans. When Bombay began to flourish under English rule, the people who had for so long lived beyond the pale exchanged Surat for the new commercial metropolis.

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The prosperity of the Parsees begins with their relationship to Great Britain, and more particularly with their settlement in Bombay. Although their lucrative business connections with English merchants were no doubt a factor of some weight in effecting this arrangement, still, first and foremost, the toleration shown by British rulers towards the new immigrants must indubitably have been the dominating consideration.

Religious toleration, individual liberty in its widest sense, equality of rights in every relationship characterise British rule everywhere, and render its yoke tolerable to subject nations. Whether Hindoos, Mohamedans, or Parsees, there is room for them all to live and move in England's World-empire. They are free to multiply and live their own life, as their calling may necessitate, their religion ordain, or their caste prescribe. The Hindoo in Bombay is allowed to burn his dead in public, close to the crowded esplanade, unmolested; the Parsee to deposit corpses to be devoured by vultures in the most coveted part of Malabar Hill. Every one is free to work out his own salvation in his own way.

He is under the protection of the strong arm of English justice — the birthright of all subjects of the King.

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CHAPTER XIII

A BALL AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE

THE "season" is at its height. Every evening there are dinners, dances, receptions, and concerts at Government House or in the town. Bombay lives up to its reputation as the chief social centre of the Anglo-Indian world.

The Governor is giving a big ball to-night. The state displayed here, as in Madras, in functions such as these, is conspicuous: the number of the servants in state liveries, the guard of honour in full uniform—his Excellency's bodyguard, huge fellows of the Sikh race and long-bearded Mohamedans in scarlet uniforms stiff with gold. Motionless as statues, they stand with their lances at rest in the doorways or in the galleries, gazing with frank astonishment at the animated throng.

Judged from the European point of view, this state may perhaps strike one as overdone. But it

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is not when you remember that in India, where the English represent only a minority, the dominant race in its manner of life cannot afford to fall behind the state and splendour of the Maharajahs and Nabobs. The Oriental mind measures power by the amount of display that accompanies it.

Black evening-dress and white shoulders! But uniforms, too, pass up and down the gaily decorated rooms. Representatives of the army in their garish red tunics; naval officers in blue and gold; the Lord Chief Justice in Court dress, and the bishop in his robes; Indians in costumes of many colours, turbaned Mohamedans, and, side by side with them, Parsees with their caps modelled after a cow's hoof on their heads—the latter accompanied by their wives and daughters. Although they wear costly ornaments of European design, according to the custom of the country, these charming figures are otherwise garbed in light pink or light blue dresses, draping their slender forms most artistically. Like delicate Tanagra statuettes these sinuous female forms glide in couples through the rooms with harmonious grace. They do not dance, but they whisper, chatter, and laugh, and the most mischievous high spirits seem to have taken possession of their giggling hearts. Yes! These Indian women are really laughing. There is

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no rarer sight in India. The Indian in polite society may indeed yawn, but as for smiling, or indeed laughing—that's out of the question.)

The company is numerous and variegated. All estates, all colours—without distinction of rank, birth, service, and means—are represented. His Excellency's hospitality is only bounded by the limitations imposed by space. Side by side with the commissioned officer and the official, the self-made man puts in an appearance. He turns up as matter of courtesy towards the Governor, not because he enjoys it. You only have to look at him to realise that. The commercial magnates have no doubt left their offices behind them, but their business cares, hopes, and fears have accompanied them. Like generals of the commercial estate, these veteran warriors who have grown grey in colonial service are only discharging a courtly duty. As soldiers they are accustomed to do what is expected of them in all circumstances.

The young officers and civilians, on the other hand, even in this degree of latitude, pay homage to Terpsichore with evident zest—in spite of the intense heat, and perhaps not exclusively for the sake of king and country. After all, Bombay can muster pretty women in great numbers, English-

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women for the most part. Some are beautiful, not a single one is ugly. All in dainty and fresh costumes.

The lion of the evening is a certain youthful major. Despite his proverbial inconstancy he remains the acknowledged favourite of the smartest of the ladies' world of Bombay—well, flowers don't ask the butterfly whether he has fluttered round others of their kind before.

Waltzes and polkas are the dances. Every now and then they interlard a quadrille. Several of the couples prefer to sit out their dances well away from the ballroom in cosy interchange of confidences.

At the buffets the general company does its duty manfully. The little Parsee ladies, too, are just tasting something here and nibbling something there, pretty, dainty, and graceful. They chatter incessantly, and their smiles reveal pearly teeth. Half roguish, half Madonna-like in expression, they look about them with their large coal-black eyes under the shadow of long lashes. The dark stars sparkle, take aim, and find their billet.

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CHAPTER XIV

MAIL-DAY IN BOMBAY

Do I owe a restless night to the languishing eyes of the Parsee ladies, or is it that I supped not wisely but too well? Between waking and sleeping I ponder this problem and find no lasting repose. One moment I feel too hot, the next too cold again. At length I discover the reason for my discomfort: the punkah coolie has fallen asleep—the punkah has come to a full stop. Then the boy had waked up again, resolved to make amends for his remissness by excess of zeal. That is the explanation of heat and chill. Who is there in India who does not, of his own bitter experience, know the eternal fight between the wakeful master who wants to sleep and the sleeping servant whose duty it is to keep awake? How often amid its throes doesn't one lose the refreshment of sleep in the course of an Indian night, all too short in any case? To

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make up for it a cold bath on the morrow must endow the tired limbs with a new lease of life. With infinite satisfaction you take your stand in the big earthenware tub and flood yourself with beneficent moisture. The refreshment derived from these shower-baths depends upon the frequency of their administration. They play their part now in the rules of Indian caste. While the Jady bath is wholly denied to the lower castes—they are only allowed to bathe in natural sheets of water — the higher, according to their degree and rank, are allowed as many as a hundred tubs.

It is a Friday, and Friday means news from home. Dear native heath! one never prizes you more than in foreign lands!

The P. and O. liner is due to arrive at midday. She is already signalled. You can look for the arrival of the mail, of letters and newspapers.

I drive down to the harbour to see the ship come in. Europeans and natives are already crowding expectantly round the jetty.

A good many passengers disembark from the tender which has ferried them across from the big liner. A sunburnt Anglo-Indian is waiting to greet his wife on her arrival. He has run down to Bombay from some distant up-country station to

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welcome her on her return. For long months he has probably had to do without his helpmate—months of hard, weary work in the scorching Indian plains for him; for her a spell of recreation at last in the green land of home. The wife tells him the news of their sons, who have had to stay behind in England for their education, and tries to make her youngest child renew its father's acquaintance, for it had to leave him too early to remember anything of him now.

A little way off similar scenes are being enacted. A bride of very tender years has crossed the broad seas to give her hand in final union to the man of her choice. The rosy breath of the climate and breezes of home are still glowing on her cheeks; she is still arrayed in London's latest fashions. Before the hot day has drawn to its close, the wedding will have been solemnised in the cathedral, and the wedding reception held in the Taj-Mahal Hotel. Then all traces of her will be lost in the dust of India, and the roses of her cheeks will yield to the ivory pallor of the tropics. In some remote frontier station or other the modern trousseau of the young wife may perhaps for a time still stir the envy of critical rivals or the desperate admiration of home-sick bachelors.

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Business men, just arrived, greet their agents, briefly and casually. Once off the ship, the time for idling is over. Officers and officials are returning from furlough, and also making their arrangements without delay to travel on up country by the first train, to say good-bye, perhaps for years, to all contact with the outside world. But it seems to strike them all as altogether a matter of course—as much a matter of course as the solar topee for which they are now exchanging their comfortable travelling-caps.

A great stream of tourists, too, floods the landing-stage. The solar topee has not yet become a second nature in their case; it still conveys too much of the charm of novelty not to be worn without mixed emotions. All these new-comers, too, despite the hurry they affect, display only a very meagre degree of initiative. Still wholly under the thrall of first impressions of India, they suffer themselves to be dragged away by friends and relatives, but for the most part by native emissaries from the hotels, like automata, without wills of their own.

"Taj-Mahal Hotel," is the watchword of Cook's agent in Bombay to-day. There he deposits his victims in the atmosphere of an American mammoth hotel, while his other Indian accomplices exploit their helplessness at the custom-house.

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MAIL-DAY IN BOMBAY

Until quite a few years ago you had to make shift with the most primitive of accommodation in Bombay. I shall never forget Watson's Hotel of unblessed memory. There I found lodging, cheap and nasty, at seven-and-six a day on the third floor. This was two shillings cheaper here than it would have been on the first floor, one less than on the second. If I had mounted higher still, I have no doubt that finally I might have lived free of charge. And this charge, mind you, included your entire board. You were free to partake of ten courses at tiffin and twenty at dinner, without taking tea and coffee with bread-and-butter and fruit into account. There was no charge, either, for baths, and tips amounted to only a few pence.

But I cannot conscientiously say that one's sojourn at an hotel of this type was exactly an enjoyable experience. In this respect, too, India has become decidedly more European to-day, and the Taj-Mahal Hotel of Bombay, more particularly, reminds me—apart from its tariff, which is still quite moderate—of the hostelries of great cities in the United States. The whim of a Parsee made the hotel. Mr Dolrika felt hurt that his private house, for all its splendour, did not prove sufficiently attractive to Europeans. So he built this modern caravanserai, and the West

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dwelt within his gates. The Parsee may not, it is true, see his money back, but he became a celebrity. They want to become celebrities and looked up to, these disciples of Zoroaster who have become rich where aforetimes they were barely tolerated. They dispense their charities on a large scale and do not stint their money. *Tout comme chez nous.* As the biggest hotel, so the most important hospital in Bombay is the foundation of a Parsee.

Manifold are the paths to celebrity. Herostratus set a temple on fire; Parsees are building hotels and hospitals.)

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CHAPTER XV

YOUNG INDIA

The time is past nowadays when the prerogatives of the white at the expense of the coloured man were unrestricted in India, when the former's prestige alone held good. Past and gone are the times when the natives, herded together in the insanitary quarters of the lower town and debarred from the benefits of sanitation, had to stew in Oriental fashion, while Europe on Malabar Hill, the El Dorado of Wealth, enjoyed the amenities and advantages of an airy, elevated site and of the most modern appliances of civilisation as its inalienable privileges.

For in the meantime the Asiatic, too, has attained to wealth and therewith to power. He has enlarged his intellectual horizon and can even bid defiance to death, for it is, after all, only poverty and misery that fall victims to the ravages of pestilence. With the recognition of the fact that the white sahibs in their

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lofty isolation lived immune from these diseases, the natives conceived the ambition of shouldering them out of their cloistered retreat.

Only comparatively few of the houses on Malabar and Amballa Hill are still in the possession of Europeans to-day. The handsomest belong to the Parsees and to rich Indians, who live there in great style. Foreigners, on the other hand, find themselves compelled to occupy the barracks of lodging-houses which wealthy natives have built by way of profitable speculation on the shore at the foot of Malabar Hill. Willy-nilly, the white man to-day has to put up with an Indian Crœsus looking down upon him from his pride of place. This is the universal plaint of the Europeans in Bombay, as it is all over India in general. The native tends to become more and more emancipated. From a position of independence to one of presumption is only a step. The humanitarian policy so predominant in certain circles in England affords it every facility.

"There is a conspiracy against the whites afoot here," a merchant of Bombay told me—"a conspiracy in the sense that the natives aim at being on top everywhere. Not only do they own the finest houses and palaces in the healthiest quarters, they ride the best horseflesh, drive the smartest carriages

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and the most expensive motors. They furnish the majority of the magistracy, keep our greatest factories busy, and from day to day take more and more complete possession of the profitable businesses in town and country. To what lengths will Indian education and prosperity and English toleration lead us in the end?"

True, the prestige of government remains in British hands, as does the supreme authority, but with the dignities they have to bear the burdens of their position as well. The heavy responsibility for law and order, the toilsome supervision of sanitary and police measures, fall on their shoulders alone, while young India in all security enjoys the protection and profits of English rule.

Hindoos, Mohamedans, Parsees are free to attend to their personal concerns at their leisure, and to augment their hoards the while the Englishman, slaving and toiling for the sake of the general common good, sacrifices the best years of his life. Only too often does he ruin his health in the strain of the strictest devotion to duty; and when his strength is then no longer equal to service in the tropics, he puts himself on board ship to fare homewards and—to die.

The days when a native stepped off the pave-

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ment or pulled up his cart to give the foreigner precedence are back-numbers. Don't let anyone venture any longer to do offhand violence to Oriental submissiveness nowadays; the arm of authority is at once stretched forth to hale the case before the Cadi —and certainly not to the prejudice of the Asiatic.

Up country, maybe, a certain halo still surrounds the white sahib; the ever-increasing propaganda of the towns has, however, robbed it of a good deal of its aforetime glamour. Time's whirligig has brought it about that the foreigners in India to-day no longer occupy a privileged position as heretofore. We are already coming across our European compatriots there engaged as subordinate employees of the big stores, as touts and commercial travellers, as employees at the hotels, as well as chauffeurs in the pay of rich natives.

The Europeans on the Peninsula—to some extent a very mixed lot—can at this time of day no longer even claim a Western education and culture as their exclusive birthright. Our social forms and mode of life have gradually become the common property of the upper ten thousand of India. Among Mohamedans, Hindoos, and Parsees we meet people of a high standard of education and culture, men who matriculate at English universities, who have gradu-

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ated in the languages and sciences of the West, who travel in Europe or America, who every year undergo their "cure" in Homburg or Karlsbad, who take advantage of every amenity of the West. They wear European clothing, and live in close contact, both socially and in business, with the foreigner. But it is just these who at heart have remained most Indian of all. "Home rule" is their secret watchword.

Western culture has availed to French-polish the surface—nothing more. In his mode of thought and in his point of view the Oriental remains what he is and has been for tens of centuries—whether he be Hindoo or Mussulman, Chinaman or Japanee.

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CHAPTER XVI

RAJPUTANA

Forest solitudes begin where Bombay ends. But they are not forests in our sense of the word. Rock-strewn plains, intersected by swamps, and barren slopes break the scrub and the low undergrowth. In between lie huge blocks of rock. Sharp-pinnacled isolated granite crests of weird formations rise as fantastic as Gothic masonry, like ruined castles grey with age. The sun's rays beat down red-hot, casting glaring searchlights over the shattered rock-work. In the distance rocky heights appear. Then a new picture unfolds itself before your eyes. Veterans of the forest keep solitary watch over verdant glades. Further away in changeful colouring forest glades, palm trees, bananas, and bamboos predominate in the ever-changeful landscape.

Flights of parrots escort the train. Monkeys hurry chattering along the rails and make us laugh

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at their antics. O you fortunate creatures of the sun, who are not condemned to waste away in the meagre light of the North!

On the horizon, like an immense yellow curtain, the dusty, sun-scorched tableland of Central India comes into view. Ever deeper the railway bores its way into the hills. But not even here do we leave all traces of civilisation behind us. Aggressive advertisement boards of the Taj-Mahal Hotel pursue us into the interior. Like naughty boys who mischievously deface respectable trees with their sign-manual, a Parsee has callously desecrated the romantic atmosphere of the landscape here. It is of a truth less trouble to pull down than to construct, easier to destroy than to afforest. All honour to the English gardener who has nursed the India of to-day into being, who has cut roads through the wilderness, has made inhospitable tracts bear fruit, has opened up virgin forests, and has made even the desert ripe for the harvest.

For my travelling companions I had a married couple from the Land of Illimitable Possibilities. He was a major, and she was in command. You clever, pretty American women, what other arrangement would be conceivable?

Mrs B. was pleased to recount her triumphs in

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Bombay. In honour of her the Governor gave a ball; an Indian Crœsus plunged into the expenses of a wedding; an eminent Parsee arranged his own burial. An extra-special performance in Pingra-Pol, the well-known Hindoo veterinary hospital. Here necessitous poor coined their blood into cash by giving themselves up at a price to be cupped by fleas and bugs. Everywhere the Bostonian was the focus of admiration. How well worth while India seemed to her: an American Vicereine, Governors of ancient lineage, coloured millionaires, fire-worshippers doomed to vultures! An asylum of sickly cows, of broken-down horses, of hens suffering from cataract, of apes covered by ulcers, birds lame of wing, of half-dead flies, of dying insects. And once again she rapturously recalled the happy fate of the bugs.

Our train stopped at many little stations, and the American patroness of our dumb friends conscientiously made use of every stop to keep her servant on the trot. She facetiously called him Twelve, because he was her twelfth within three weeks. Poor Twelve! you too will soon be about ready for the Pingra-Pol.

Towards evening a fourth traveller got into our carriage, an Eurasian. That is the name they give to the descendants of a white father and a native

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mother in India. For several decades the Eurasians have been intermarrying. They are all Christians, for the most part Roman Catholics. They wear European dress exclusively, and adopt Western habits only, more especially whisky. Neither European nor Indian, the Eurasians occupy an uncomfortable twilight position. They would like to count for whites, but are not acknowledged by them. Nor does the native make a boast of their kinship. Their deplorable fate has made these half-castes suspicious and shifty. While they are endowed, so I was told, with intelligence and alertness, they inherit for the most part the defects—not the qualities—of both races. Left to their own devices, they are alleged to lose their heads on the smallest provocation. The more extraordinary does it seem that Eurasians are almost exclusively engaged in the railway service of India.

However, in spite of our Eurasian guard and engine-driver, I reach Baroda after a twelve hours' journey without mishap. It is still early in the morning. Mrs B. is wrapped in deep slumber. All the more does the major now come to the fore. These Yankees, so often misunderstood, are no commanders in our sense of the word. They only hold brevet rank, whether as husbands or as military

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men. And yet they acquit themselves, and not in their places of business alone, as the most accomplished strategists.

What would the majesty of the American woman without her male appendage amount to?

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H.H. THE GAIKWAR OF BARODA, G.C.S.I.

Wearing his historic ropes of pearls

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CHAPTER XVII

BARODA

She used to model in bread crumbs; she knew how to manufacture little birds and dancing butterflies out of paper, and to turn my pocket-handkerchief into a mouse with pointed ears. Clever Mrs Ducate! Winsome lightheartedness and genuine devotion to duty—graceful versatility and persistent endurance. She had a little gem of a fox-terrier, called Lucky, who, being inseparable from his kind mistress, accompanied her everywhere. The sunshine of Baroda in dull days was Mrs Ducate, and a loyal helpmate of her husband, who at this remote outpost was left in charge of the business of the Resident on furlough.

Baroda belongs to the great federation of states of the Rajputana princes. Beautiful, hospitable Rajputana, land of rajahs, ranas, maharajahs, maharanas, the sovereign chiefs, little and great kings—

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poor in territory, rich in deeds, famous in the story of the Peninsula.

At the present juncture Rajputana or Rajastan is made up of twenty-five independent states so called. The princes of Mewar, Gwalior, Jeypore, and Jodpore are accounted its principal and most influential rulers nowadays.

The Rajputs—a hardy, tough, sturdy people of herdsmen, hunters, and warriors—immigrated into India from the northern districts. They settled between the Indus and the Jumna, but, ever eager for adventure, spread over other parts of the Peninsula as well. The joy of battle and the nomad instincts were of old in the blood of these proud sons of the North. As their name—king's sons, in Sanscrit—implies, the Rajputs belong to the knightly caste, which, together with the Brahmin caste, ranks highest. Relationships on the patriarchal plan, on the lines of the Scottish clan system, unite the rulers and their subjects.

The strenuous Rajput princes founded flourishing settlements and great towns, built strongholds, splendid temples and castles, laid out glorious gardens, and all the time they wielded the sword. Involved in incessant feuds among themselves, they stood together against extraneous foes. Thus the

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assaults of the great Mogul emperors were time after time repulsed. Only the expansion of the British World-empire ensured lasting peace to the country of the Rajputs, exhausted by incessant fighting.

In Baroda, too, English intervention appeared in the guise of welcome relief. When in the year 1802 the then Gaikwar, Anandrao, was taken captive by his Arabian mercenaries, who had made themselves masters of the capital, and was kept prisoner in his own palace, the Government of Bombay released him from his durance.

The golden cannon, silver carriages, and fabulous jewels of the Gaikwar, amid which "The Star of the Deccan" gleams conspicuously, had enticed me to his capital, which I was minded to visit *en passant* on my travels. But the genuine kindness of Mr and Mrs Ducate, whose acquaintance I made in Baroda, induced me to prolong my stay beyond my first intention, in spite of the plague that was raging anew here without respect for rank or creed.

More swiftly and more devastatingly than elsewhere is pestilence able to work its ravages in India. The utter misery and unspeakable uncleanliness of the lower strata, and the entire lack of sanitary precautions once off from the great

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military roads, ensure the black reaper an awful harvest. Millions of human lives are thrown away, for the well-planned measures of the English Government are only too often stultified by the antagonism of its subjects, who look upon dirt as the most inalienable of their heirlooms.

Captain Ducate, as acting Resident, directs the campaign against the plague indefatigably, and his devoted wife, too, is not afraid to cheat the Angel of Death of his victims. A true daughter of Albion overseas, high-spirited and brave, she dispenses comfort and succour, and distributes flannel cholera-belts in countless numbers. Flannel is the best armour against the attacks of that grimmest of foes of the human race—the Plague.

But along with this Mrs Ducate still finds time to set her house in the best of order, to see to the daily exercising of her beloved Lucky, to give the parrot Polly its lump of sugar moistened in tea, to do the honours of her drawing-room, to extract melody of sorts out of the untuned piano, to sing as a matter of duty, to attend divine service in her Sunday best on Sunday afternoons, to show me the Gaikwar's silver-harnessed oxen, and to chaperon me on a round of calls. We pay our formal call on the wife of the Resident on furlough—and, what is

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more, as etiquette in India demands, at about mid-day, when the sun is at its hottest.

In the streets we frequently meet the funeral trains. On an open bier, uncovered, the dead bodies are borne to the funeral pyres. Eyes and nose in India become inured to such commonplace incidents, nor have we any cause to fear the pestilence, for we go in for baths and are wearing flannel.

The Resident's wife is at home, and receives us in her habit with the wonted cordiality of all Englishwomen in India. She shows us the skin of her forty-ninth tiger, which she bagged a few days ago. We talk about the plague and Persian cats, which are Mrs Martelli's particular hobby. Jimmy, her big tomcat, and Lucky are fast friends. Mrs Martelli dismisses me with many letters of introduction and wishes me good sport. I kiss her hand gratefully, and am not loth to do it, for her hand is white and fair for all the forty-nine tigers it has sent to their last account.

In Ducate's company I duly call on the Gaikwar. It is always instructive to see an ex-cattle drover on a throne. He rounded up his dancing girls for my benefit, and made them dance until I was heartily sick of it. Oh, these Indian Bajaderes! Another of life's worst disillusionments!

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Bacchantes? Instinct with intoxicating sensuality? Not a bit of it! Stumpy they are, and fat, with red teeth, with hair dripping with oil, enveloped mummy-like in thick, silver-spangled, woven veils. So far from being fair, entrancing visions, they look like chrysalises in clumsy cocoons that will assuredly never escape as dainty butterflies from their ugly larvæ stage. Only face, hands, and feet are visible in so far as they too are not hidden by earrings, silver bracelets and anklets. Monotonously the nautch-girls advance and retire in rhythm, raise their arms in angular, inartistic gestures, twist and turn in convulsive posturings. It is not with their feet that these votaries of Terpsichore dance—only with their head, their hands, and their repulsively contorted trunks.

Where is the dainty grace of the geisha, where the heady voluptuous beauty of the odalisque or the nervous sinuousness of the competently trained balleteuse?

No unveiled white arms, no gleaming bared necks, no slim, shapely legs, no swirl of diaphanous drapery, no fiery whirl of pink tights!

To the accompaniment of a monotonous chant the nautch-girls perform their pagoda-like movements. They distort their normally dull, expression-

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less faces into languishing or reproachful and defiant expressions alternately. But for the explanations of my expert host the love scenes they wrung out of their inner consciousness would have escaped me unnoted.

The music, orchestral and vocal, is alike ghastly. Pipes, drums, bagpipes, and iron sherds furnish the orchestra. Long before the conclusion of the exhausting performance I am longing for the end. At length the Gaikwar, too, has had enough of it. I am permitted to take my leave, and press his hand in silent sympathy. A smile of embarrassment plays round the sovereign's thick lips, which no doubt are able to pay due homage to the dusky charms of his beauties. After all, rice owes its savour to curry, as his Highness was pleased to observe facetiously. Well, here's luck to your dalliance, royal philanderer!

How attractive elsewhere in India is the impression left by the sinuous grace of the women of the people, who carry their water-pitchers to the well with lofty dignity—goddesses descended from Olympus. But as for that exhibition of stiff-legged clumsiness——

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE PRINCE OF WALES

LONG-SUFFERING reader, is it your ambition to shoot tigers, real big royal tigers? Then woo the favour of the Maharajah of Gwalior. He is the richest prince of India, and ruler of a country as big as Scotland. A splendid reception awaits you should you succeed in finding favour in his eyes. But the monarch is decidedly hard of hearing, more especially if it is a case of royal tigers; for he preserves these only for royal rifles.

All the crowned heads of England, all the princely guests of the Anglo-Indian Government, such as Governors-General of the Peninsula, pay a visit to Gwalior in order to loose the trigger at a royal tiger. Such an honour costs the princely purveyor of the entertainment millions, and empties many a cage. Whence else do you expect them to turn up, punctually to the minute, these many

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TIGER-SHOOTING

The Prince of Wales's bag as the guest of the Maharajah of Gwalior

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savage royal tigers? But I have almost been telling tales out of school. It is not seemly to disturb the illusions of celebrities and royalties, or to cheat them of their joy in the chase.

A phalanx of beaters, an army of hunting elephants, are levied and mobilised. And, lest the distinguished strangers should suffer any undue hardships, they cleverly transform the jungles of cultivated wilderness into Elysian fields. Whole forests of palm trees in pots, in fact, does the Maharajah Scindia inoculate into the inhospitable soil, in order to decorate the setting of the princely tents. Temporary motor roads are planed out into the great preserves; and where normally every spring runs dry in the glowing soil, champagne flows in icy streams. A German compatriot, Herr Keller, the manager of the station hotel at Agra, works this miracle, and looks after the commissariat department generally. He is Court purveyor to all the princes of Rajputana once it is a case of laying the table in European style and of making out royal bills. Keller & Co. in Agra is the warehouse of supererogatory Western delicacies in tins and German champagne—"sparkling hock," as they call it.

Thanks to an introduction from the late Sir Curzon Wyllie—at that time head of a department

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in the India Office—his Highness invites me to Gwalior.

The day and hour of arrival are fixed, and expectation of tigers that are to follow in due course, keeps me awake o' nights. Will he serve me up one of these, or will he cool my ardour under a douche of German champagne?

However, among the potentates of the Peninsula the name of Wyllie is an open sesame. A letter from the seats of the mighty in the India Office acts like a magic formula throughout the whole land. Kings and princes, high dignitaries and officials, white and coloured alike, come under its spell, and even the tigers go about a-lashing of their tails when they hear the India Office mentioned.

In the eyes of ambitious globe-trotters an invitation to Gwalior stands for a rare record. My servant Paul gives himself airs among his peers on the strength of it. With marked zeal and in the sweat of his brown face he cleans my boots, brushes my dust-laden clothes as we approach the capital of the tiger's paradise. A whistle sounds; our train runs into a station decorated with flags, palms, and garlands. Is this Gwalior? Am I awake or asleep? Carpets of many colours and paper lanterns, a military review? Is a Fata Morgana of my own

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imagination tricking me? Indian cavalry in full-dress uniform, with red and white pennons fluttering from their lances, are drawn up opposite the platform; numerous Indian dignitaries in brilliant dress, wearing orders and medals, are parading in the station. A painful sense of embarrassment overwhelms me; my modest travelling kit and this splendour! Paul is trembling behind me; he grows smaller and smaller, but the Count Sahib is now revealed in quite a new light in his eyes.

A young Indian officer, followed by two scarlet-clad sowars smothered in gold, steps up to my carriage, salutes, and hands me a big blue letter, "by order of his Highness."

"I am sorry not to be able to receive you during these days"—runs the burden of the fateful missive. "Overnight the heir to the Imperial throne sent word he would be my guest for tiger-shooting. I cannot even express my regret to you personally, for we are just awaiting the arrival of our distinguished visitor. I shall be pleased to welcome you a week later, and for to-day be good enough just to stay to lunch. My aide-de-camp will do the honours."

The clash of bells was already announcing the approach of the royal train. The magnates of the country gather round their prince. In the garish

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sunlight the gold and silver lace on their many-coloured garments gleams brightly. The Maharajah himself is a blaze of jewels, and wearing the insignia of the Grand Cross of the Star of India. What is Haroun al Rashid in the fairy glamour of his caliphate by compare?

There is no time for me to leave the station, hemmed in by an impenetrable throng of people. Without a part in the stately reception, I watch the brilliant spectacle, and respectfully doff my travelling cap as the special thunders into the station to the familiar strains of "God save the King."

Three gentlemen in mufti—the Prince of Wales and his suite—alight from the saloon. A crowd of Indian servants remain inside.

In the most cordial manner the distinguished guest anticipates the Maharajah's respectful greeting, shakes hands with him, and turns cordially towards the dignitaries waiting reverently. He bears himself with civilian unostentation, with the most winning straightforwardness. The heir of the World-empire on the historic soil of India, that has bequeathed to his dynasty the splendour of the old Hindoo kingdom and the sceptre of the Mogul emperors.

Every inch a king in his simplicity is the impression the congenial figure of the Prince gives me

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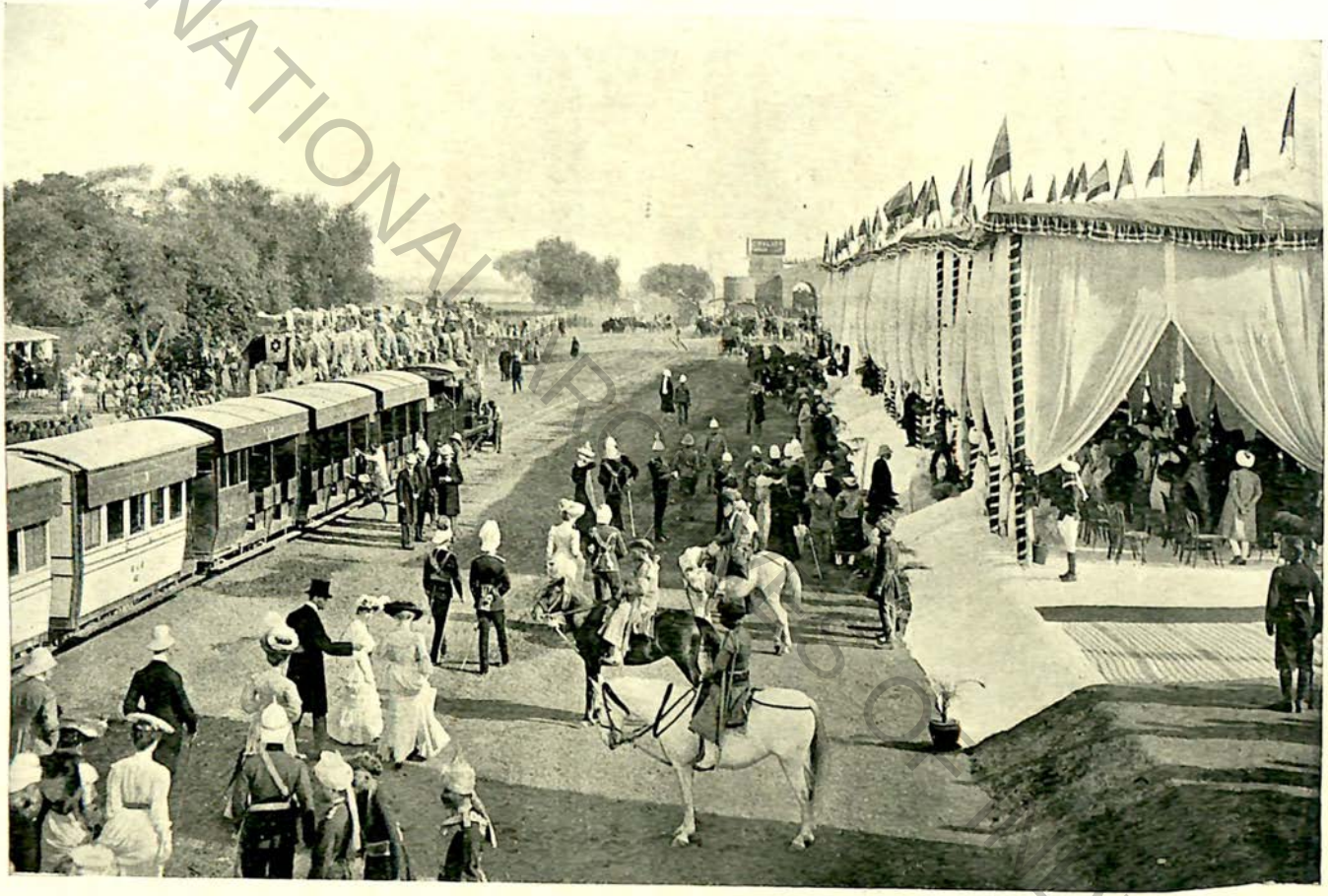

FEUDATORY STATE

The arrival of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales at Gwalior

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amid the pomp of an Oriental setting that brings his unassuming personality into high relief.

Indeed, a flannel suit and a hat could hardly be more effective anywhere than in this setting, stiff with gold and bristling with arms—than in the country of feudal traditions and sumptuary pomp.

Never before did I feel more conscious of England's might and greatness than at this moment when the modest dignity of her future sovereign, rejecting all extraneous attributes, every trace of the circumstance of royalty, yet made itself so emphatically felt.

The Princess of Wales had remained behind in Agra. Court duties, philanthropic work as well, detained her there. Her Royal Highness shows her interest in it all and her sympathy with every one. The noble lady has a broad grasp of domestic and foreign affairs, and they also speak highly of her military instinct and her political intelligence.

The consort of the Heir to the Throne in England, in India the Princess is a queen already —a queen of hearts.

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CHAPTER XIX

DHOLPORE

I KNOCK at the door of the adjoining state of Dholpore, and meet with a cordial reception. The prince there is only a lesser magnate. He does not entertain kings, but his manner of life is kingly. Years ago I spent some one or two days as the guest of the Rana of Dholpore, the father of my host of to-day.

For chivalrous dignity, for genuine innate courtesy, Ram Singh is in no way behind his predecessor, though lacking the latter's outstanding, strongly marked personality.

With Nehal Singh one of the last of the stock of old-time Rajput princes has passed away. His son stands for the rising generation.

An absolute autocrat, given to display to the verge of extravagance, unbridled in his passions, Nehal Singh invested himself with kingly state. Dexterous and reckless wherever bodily prowess, courage, and

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resolution were concerned, he was *grand seigneur* to the manner born. He rode the noblest horses, he built the most glorious palaces, wore the most precious pearls, and loved the most beautiful of women.

Simpler in his tastes, the reigning prince, as far as possible, keeps outward display at arm's-length. Ram Singh is rather a votary of latter day sportsmanship than of sensuous pleasures. Averse from Oriental splendour, such as his father was wont to display, even in his dress he studies quiet unostentation. Nehal Singh, though himself hardly master of a single foreign tongue, had his son educated on thoroughly modern lines. The present ruler of Dholpore speaks perfect English with only a trace of foreign accent. The range of his intelligence, and his excellent judgment are universally acknowledged, though they say that he makes his decisions subject to long-drawn deliberation. But, after all, the British Resident is a counsellor at his elbow, and in his private concerns Mr Thorpe, an English engineer, gives his new master his assistance. So the young Rana can motor busily to and fro through his little kingdom without feeling the cares of state unduly oppressive.

They had again allotted the strangers' residence outside the town to me as my quarters. Ram Singh

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escorts me to them, shows me to my rooms, smokes a cigarette with me, and, after an interchange of old reminiscences, leaves me to my fate. Alone in the great palace, I ponder bygone times.

My dinner passes in solitary state. In French champagne, which Nehal Singh was fond of drinking every day, I dedicate a silent toast to the memory of my late host and of the beautiful Ranee. She was the wife of Nehal Singh, and the only Indian woman of rank I have ever seen. Her complexion was like that of a Frenchwoman of the South. Full of dignity, and withal of winning graciousness, the Ranee united the pride of beauty with generous kindliness of heart. From her pale, finely chiselled features shone eyes like dark, wondrous flowers. They had burgeoned in no common soil, blossomed in no niggard sunlight. The glow of the Indian sky was mirrored in their shining depths.

Raised to the rank of favourite wife after the death of his legal spouse, the Ranee carried her gratitude to her husband beyond the grave. She only survived the prince, who passed away from her in the flower of his years, by a few hours. In her grief for the man she loved so well, she is said to have brought about her own end.

The loyalty of the Indian wife is proverbial. Self-

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sacrificing, self-denying, of deep affections, the Indian woman is the personification of true femininity, of gentle devotion, and rounded charms.

When Brahma, creator of the Universe, was minded to give a helpmate to man, he became, to his consternation, aware that he had already used up the whole of his material on the latter. Not knowing what to do, the god looked about him and took the stuff to fashion woman from the rest of his creations. "He took," the Indian legend tells, "the lovely curve of the moon, the sinuous undulations of the body of the snake, the mobile grace of the quaking grass, the satin softness of the flower, the tender tendrils of the climbing plant, the witchery of the dancing sunbeam, the slender suppleness of the willow, the vanity of the proud peacock, the ingratiating wiles of the cat, the sweetness of the honey, the gentleness of the dove, the cruelty of the tiger, and withal the coldness of ice and the heat of the fire. After this manner did Brahma create woman."

And yet on her entrance into life the Indian woman is greeted with a curse, and received as a visitation of the gods' displeasure!

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CHAPTER XX

THE RANA NEHAL SINGH

THE barber! You find him everywhere in India, in the market-place and in the street of the great cities as in the smallest village—even at the stopping-places on the railway, where he accommodatingly proffers his services to shave you in your carriage.

With bare feet he enters your room noiselessly. His paraphernalia is exceedingly primitive: a razor and a little metal box of soap. He strops his razor on his lower arm, and there too he deposits what he has taken off your face. No Indian, be he ever so rich or never so poor, shaves himself. But in another respect, too, the Indian barber is an indispensable personage. For does he not know all local secrets and the habits of every household? He is a walking agony column, Love's messenger working overtime.

Dholpore, too, has its Figaro. I was yet lying a

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captive of my dreams when he was already standing by my bedside. He raised both hands to his forehead in greeting, and without a word he inclined the whole of his trunk towards the earth. But in my case he hadn't much luck—either as a barber or Love's go-between. Nevertheless, I was grateful to him for breaking in on my slumbers, for soon an invitation from the Rana summons me to pig-sticking. The meet at 7 a.m. at Kassarbar.

Kassarbar! Memories of days never to be forgotten, spent far from the little squalid capital amid a sea of rocks! As if borne on the crest of surging waves, the pink sandstone of the palace rises to meet a sky of eternal blue. A magic castle, crowned with cupolas and towers, Nehal Singh's creation looks down in proud isolation on a stony wilderness and the treeless desert all around. Here the Rana kept gorgeous court. Here he entertained his guests in royal splendour. Here he forgathered them for merry festivals and joyous hunting parties.

The start for the chase made a brilliant spectacle that in its Eastern setting has impressed itself on my memory in indelible colours. Clearly defined before my gaze rises the tall, chivalrous figure of the late Rana. I watch him leaving the palace to mount his horse. Barking loudly, two huge Russian deer-

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hounds dash out in front of the prince. His retinue waiting in the courtyard raise their hands in salute; the crowd throw themselves to the earth in homage, and kiss the dust from his stirrups.

Attached to the more immediate suite of the sovereign was a Hungarian—a man of a distressful past, but destined to find a rich future awaiting him in Dholpore. Mr G. became the prince's master of the routs, furnished and provided everything—horses, musical-boxes, deerhounds, pearls—and cheated the generous Rana in accordance with the measure of his confidence.

Only the Hungarian and Mr Thorpe are permitted to take part in the chase. At a distance the Indian dignitaries and the cavalcade of hunters—perhaps a hundred noble Arabian and Australian thoroughbreds—fall in slowly behind us. They are following in order to have a fresh mount ready for the Rana and his guests at any moment. They hand us the spears, the signal to get to work. At the head of the cavalcade Nehal Singh, behind him his son, my courteous host of to-day.

Immediately beyond the courtyard of the palace lie the preserves. What a curious country! Naked blocks of stone, rubble, prickly hedges of cacti. We canter over slopes and gullies, and cross deep fissures

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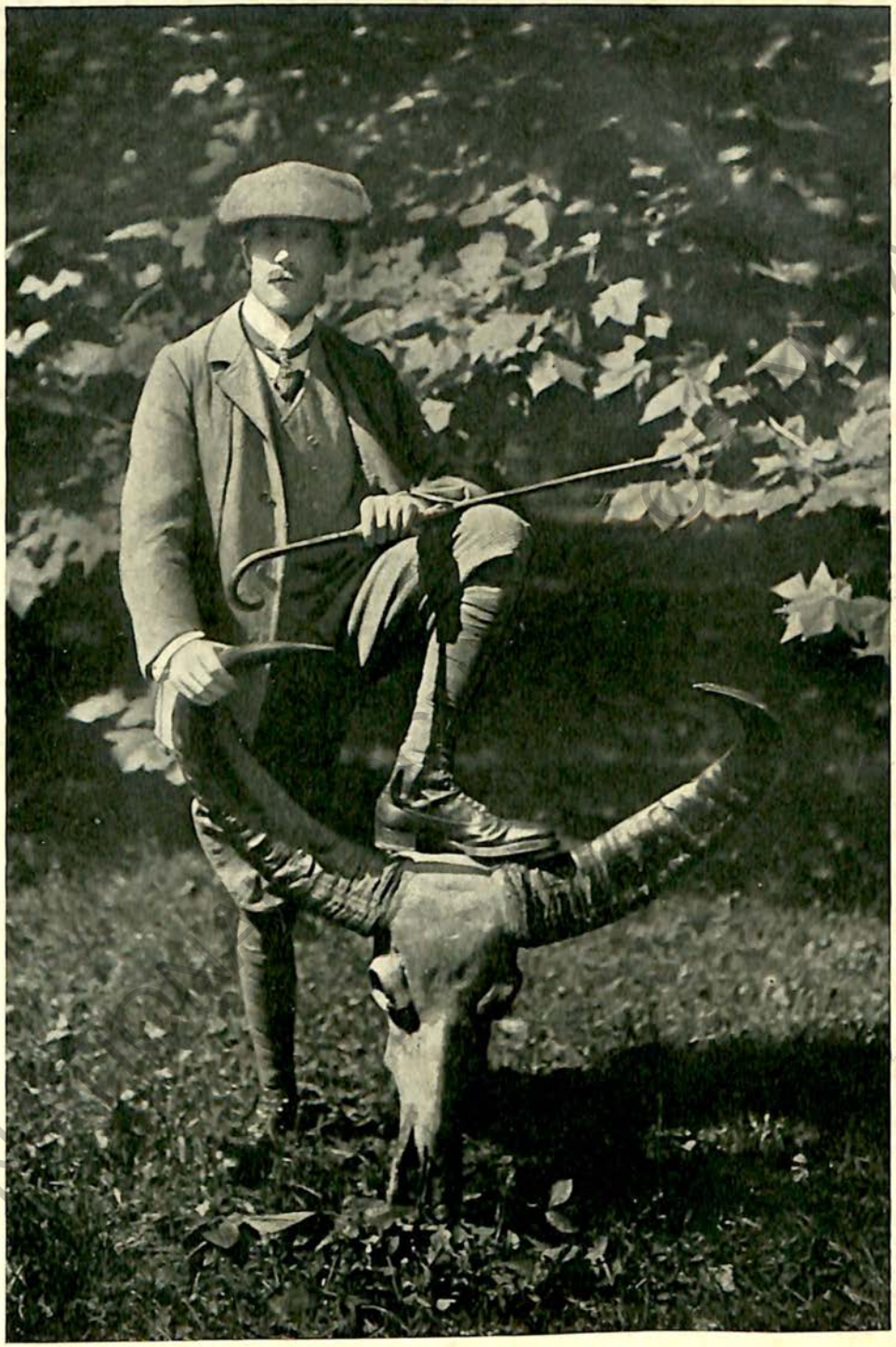

A FINE HEAD

A buffalo shot by the Author

with rock-bound edges. In the plains the crumbling soil of cotton fields is interspersed with sandy, barren land intersected by high grass-grown mounds. There is plenty of jumping to be had here, often enough into the unknown.

The cleverness of our horses was amazing. They never came down, and were hardly ever at fault. They rarely cast a shoe, and only occasionally went lame. How much our German farriers would have been able to learn here, as well as many of our horsemen who think it is only possible to gallop on soft ground!

Not a single one of the thoroughbreds behaved obstreperously, but all went at it with a will, if without devilry. And most of them were stallions at that. Not one of them bit or kicked, not even during the meet. Even in the stables they stand side by side without a pole, hobbled by one fore and one hind leg to a long rope.

The pace keeps on growing faster; more game keeps breaking cover in front of us. Bulls, antelopes, gazelles, dappled deer, hyenas, and jackals take to flight. Many pigs, too, scurry away; but so far only squeakers and sows. Then, at last, they view a tusker. The Rana gives the signal to gallop. Absolutely recklessly he gives his guests a lead,

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flying over the ground with his couched spear, and a few minutes later he has laid out the tusker.

Pig-sticking is a manly sport, for it calls for pluck and skill.

Nehal Singh was acknowleged the best pig-sticker in India. He had won most of the open events. In his private saloon the Prince travelled from one tournament to the other. A thorough Rajput, he enjoyed life for sheer joy of living, and scattered millions with both hands. But it was not only his masterful lavishness that made him the idol of his people. His kindness of heart, his unbounded hospitality, won over high and low alike.

To-day the son is bearing the burden of his universally popular father's debts. Calcutta bought the far-famed pearls in order to lay them at the feet of the Princess of Wales on the occasion of her visit to India. The stud was no longer kept up to full strength. The days of the Hungarian and of the beautiful deerhounds are over. The lovely Ranee has passed away. Behind those silken lashes the sunshine of her eyes has set for ever. Mr Thorpe alone endures, faithful at his post.

In darkling silence lies the palace of Kassarbar, once illuminated like a fairy castle. They are letting it fall to ruins piecemeal—its upkeep would be too costly.

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Furnished, amid a rocky desert, with every latter-day refinement—electric light and fans, water supply, and the telephone—it alone would eat up the civil list of Dholpore to its own cheek to-day. Built only a few years ago Kassarbar already resembles a ruin. The many-voiced orchestra of the giant gramophone, which, with other modern devices, contributed to the entertainment of the late Prince, is dumb too.

I call on Mr Thorpe in his familiar bungalow. For the last twenty years he has lived there only for his duties. He is up to his eyes in work: he has nothing else to do. We talk of old times, of Rana Nehal Singh, of the new master, too. "He is economical and reserved, a cool-headed, introspective young man."

Ram Singh inhabits the old palace again in the interior of the town. He does not go the pace; he does not keep a Hungarian master of the routs, nor does he wear any pearls.

But the princely hospitality of Dholpore is unchanged. It has remained the same as it was during the life time of Nehal Singh. Most enjoyable days were again my lot as the guest of the young ruler. Tennis, billiards, and motor drives beguiled the hours.

Many gazelles, bulls, and antelopes fell victim to

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my rifle. We paid our homage to the noble craft of horsemanship, as its unrivalled master understood it. But the field no longer followed its young master with the same dash as aforetime—we missed Nehal Singh to give us a lead.

A cup to his memory and a rose for the Ranee!

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CHAPTER XXI

THE TAJ-MAHAL

Who can paint the brightness of the sun
In the full splendour of his midday light?

WHOSE pen can conjure up the Taj-Mahal—this creation of the fairy world, this dream in marble that rises gleaming white in its proud purity, its lofty majesty: an overwhelming victory of Love over Death the conqueror?

Who is there who does not know the Taj-Mahal in pen and pencil? Who is ignorant of its story, in its outward pomp and inward splendour? Words are powerless to depict it, colours to reproduce it—you have to see it to be able to feel its mysterious spell, to realise its incomparable beauty.

An emperor's love has here raised an imperishable monument to his dead wife, has salvaged her name from oblivion and crowned her with the aureole of immortality.

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Lovingly nature clasps the shrine in an embrace of brimming verdure. In the midst of glorious gardens, which tropical vegetation dowers lavishly—and craftsmanship has enhanced the effect of their glowing splendour—the white marble building strains triumphantly towards the blue ether, towards the clear skies of India, whose translucent azure seems to open over the tomb of the Mogul empress.

In face of this snowy miracle, of this surrounding paradise, the sadness and gloom of the mutability of earthly things fade away; it is a pæan as old as life and always new that falls on our ears in the whisper of the tree-tops, in the murmur of the waters.

Limitless wealth and the treasures of every zone, creative power and creative instinct, the full resources of his Imperial power, did the Mogul ruler requisition to glorify his love. The Taj-Mahal is worthy of its builder, worthy of the beauty it was destined to immortalise.

Here Mumtazee Mahal, "the sublimity of the palaces," sleeps her last sleep by the side of Shah Jehan. In childbirth inexorable Death snatched the woman he loved so well from her husband's side in the flower of her years.

Even the least receptive of temperaments must thaw in this hallowed place of worship, where every

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day for centuries silent congregations of pious pilgrims have bowed their foreheads to the threshold. A white cathedral is this tomb. Gleaming white marble walls overarch the shrine in a lofty dome. Neither paintings nor trophies adorn its span. Everything is of stone,—of milk-white, gleaming marble. But the marble is alive; softly, like the harmonies of heavenly choirs, it echoes to the sound of voices, mournfully sweet like a strain of wailing.

Through the alabaster mesh of the window embrasures the dazzling sunlight filters tempered, and tenderly its rays kiss the sarcophagus which bears the effigy of the dead. Flowers she loved in life surround the dead Empress, imperishable blooms, jewels that gleam and sparkle in every hue.

At the foot of the mausoleum, like huge Persian carpets, carefully tended flower beds are unrolled. A symphony of colour blent into harmony, a song in praise of the departed, they lighten the glorious picture in magic fashion.

Cypresses, palms, pomegranate and lemon trees are mirrored in the clear waters which over a hundred fountains splash down into the broad marble basins. Sprinkled by the glistening dew, a sea of blossom sparkles all round like myriads of budding rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and diamonds. The intoxi-

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cating fragrance of roses and jasmine fills the warm air.

Below the terrace flows the sacred Jumna. Down stream extends the city of Agra, with its countless monuments, girt by its palm groves. Beyond, as far as the eye can reach, a sunny plain with its mysterious interplay of light and shade.

Once again at midnight I visit the Taj-Mahal. The full moon is floating over the place of peace. The dazzling beauty of the snowy dome which rises over the heads of the dead and gone, stands out gleaming against the dark. Caressingly the silver moonbeams trickle down the lacelike tracery of the white marble walls. The cypresses that, veiling the sky, meet above my head, tremble softly in the warm breeze, and through the fragrant night comes a sound like low whispers, and the murmur of the fountains echoes dreamily.

Then the penetrating cry of the Mullah at prayer pierces the solemn stillness: "Allah, be gracious to her soul!"

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CHAPTER XXII

THE WONDERS OF AGRA

In foreign lands, where every day brings some new scene, humanity remains the most interesting subject for the traveller's kodak.

The flowing and ceaseless tide of the globe-trotters, which reaches its high water-mark at Agra, proffers rich material for snapshots of the most various kinds. All countries, all nations, are represented in the visitors' books of the hotels here. Among them I see the name of Hermione von Preuschen; but I am sorry to say my art-loving compatriot had already shaken the dust of the old Imperial town from her feet.

In Agra the golden age of Asiatic medievalism is crystallised in a wealth of splendid buildings: the Taj-Mahal, Fort Akbar, the Pearl Mosque, the Mosque of Jama-Masjid, the Jasmine Tower, the Emperor Aurungezebe's Hall of Audience.

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The motley flood of sight-seeing tourists that, year in year out, laps round its legend-haunted walls never ebbs. With their red *Murray*—which cannot conform here to its odious practice of shedding its colour in rainy weather—in their hand, the taciturn children of Albion and the rather noisy progeny of the New World ply incessantly from place to place, from one palace to the next.

No disillusion threatens their lust for sight-seeing, where the actual spectacle always outbids the most superlative promises of the thick-set guide-book. For the Anglo-Indian Government spares neither labour nor expense, not only to protect the historic places of India against further decay, but to restore them to their pristine splendour. Only a few years ago unsightly buildings and waste places defaced the immediate surroundings of the Taj-Mahal, while to-day it is at rest again in peace as aforetime in the lap of its setting of verdure and of flowers.

Lord Curzon more particularly devoted his especial interest to the preservation of these monuments of Indian art. During his term of office extensive works of restoration were carried out, at considerable outlay to the Treasury, by Indian artists and architects. It is thanks mainly to his influence that the bygone art of Hindoos and Moslems enjoys

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a new lease of life on the Peninsula, and that his fellow-countrymen have learnt to do pious honour to this aspect of their glorious heritage.

At the same time, it is not fair to charge Lord Curzon's predecessors on the Viceregal throne with neglecting Indian architecture, even if up to now they have lacked the necessary leisure to devote their particular attention to these precious relics of bygone splendour.

What would in all probability have been the fate of these wondrous buildings if England had not taken possession of India? They would have plundered them, perhaps, and put them up to the highest bidder, or—a thought to make one's hair stand on end—come to have found a use for the Taj-Mahal as a hoarding for "Californian Fruit Company" or "Armour's Beef Tea." British rule has safeguarded the treasures of art from destruction, has preserved them and given them freely to be enjoyed by all and sundry. And what is more, without fee or charge.

"Nor do we levy a charge on visitors to the great slaughter-houses of Chicago," rejoined the man I sat next to at dinner—an American tourist, of course.

Amid the quaint medley of our company a Swiss now holds forth. He is a traveller for indigo, motor

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cars, watches, Black Forest clocks, and jewellery. He is therefore modestly of opinion that the Kohinoor comes within his "line." He uplifts his voice in praise of this old-time wonder of Agra. If no longer the first in point of size, for its purity of water the diamond is probably the most beautiful in the world. Its changeful fortunes, closely linked with the conquest of the Punjab, make British pulses beat faster. After a famous past at the courts of Indian princes, the Kohinoor to-day adorns the golden circlet of the English crown.

Will the Cullinan eclipse it? The patriotic citizen of America turns pale at the thought of a record in the possession of the Old World.

On my right sits a fair-haired Anglo-Saxon girl. She is circumnavigating the world—with her blue eyes—alone. They had, indeed, seen the sights of Agra's fairy world, but had watched the incidents on board the *Arabia* with deeper interest—for only these did Miss Butterfly deem worthy of mention. Affianced to a doctor at home, she was at the moment languishing for an officer of the Royal Indian Mail whose acquaintance she had made on a lyric moonlight night during the voyage. Who, I wonder, before the end of her voyage round the world will give her eighteen-year-old heart its next thrill?

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The company round the table begins to thin out. The strains of a piano out of tune reach us from the reading-room—fragments of *Ave Maria*, *Traviata*, and *Faust*: somehow, despite the discord, they appeal to us agreeably, these memories of our far-off home. "We change our skies above us, but not our hearts, who roam."

On the terrace of the hotel peddlers, with their wares spread out on the ground in front of them, are squatting. With an equal amount of importunity and eloquence they lay siege to the ingenuousness of the foreigner. Mosaics, wood or ivory carvings, silk shawls, weapons, metal work, carpets, and thousands of other genuine wares from Birmingham or Crimmitschau are being appraised indefatigably. And the globe-trotter does not only buy, but even rejoices at the cheapness of the curios he has purchased. A like satisfaction fills the heart of the purchaser of the faked curios as that of the smirking salesman who has succeeded in getting rid of his rubbish. For the rest, the greed of the itinerant trader of India keeps within modest bounds: a handful of rice for his daily needs, earned by a homeopathic expenditure of energy, satisfies his wildest ambition.

A last whisky-and-soda, and then to bed. For is it not the business of the morrow to admire with

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strength recruited the art of the East in its sublimest manifestations, to see the Orient as—more splendid than any effort of the imagination—the magic wand of Mogul Cæsars materialised it? The great Akbar—a descendant of Timur and a contemporary of Queen Elizabeth—the mightiest among Eastern monarchs, transferred the seat of his dynasty from Delhi to the banks of the Jumna, where he built Agra. Here he and his successors—like him, men made on a large scale—raised monuments which mark the zenith of Moslem architecture. In addition to the creative genius of Akbar, of Jehangir, and, above all, of Aurungezebe, Shah Jehan's artist instinct for display found its expression in many buildings.

The red sandstone walls of the Fort—one and a half English miles in circumference—enclose the proud homesteads of the Mogul emperors.

Flaming up to a blaze of splendour, the lofty spirit of armoured chivalry reached its apotheosis here. Its restless, roving phantasy, which finds its expression in the mobile lines of the conception as a whole, breathes lightness and grace in diametrical antithesis to the massive bulk of ancient Hindoo buildings, and has stamped itself on the wondrously intricate and glowing decorativeness of the exterior ornamentation—pink sandstone, white marble, noble

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domes, dainty minarets, which, like trembling flowers on slender stalks, shoot up into the cloudless blue of Indian skies.

On the step of the Pearl Mosque, the white temple of dreamy poetry, a dying Hindoo recalls me abruptly to brutal realism. With the death-rattle in his throat, he squirms in his death-agony on the flags. "Strangers think he is dying of hunger," my servant Paul observes with equanimity; "but we have known him for years. The man earns a lot of money."

Poor, needy knife-grinder!

Like his contemporary, Louis XIV., the Emperor Aurungezebe, the son of Shah Jehan, abandoned himself to extravagant magnificence and luxurious sensuality. The court he had built for public audience is magnificently impressive in its grand proportions. By the endless, changeful, perspective of the countless columns, interlinked throughout by double arches, the solemn effect is relieved by the charm of the picturesque. The scheme of his baths was designed to subserve joyous pleasures and highly coloured joy of life. What has been preserved of them is enough to outline a picture of magic splendour to the imagination. The radiance of thousands of candles was reflected in the gleam of

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splashing fountains; water bright as silver trickled down to the marble baths in which the beauties of the harem stretched their slender limbs luxuriously; the surface of the walls aglow with the inexhaustible variety of their gay ornamentation—a picture of unrivalled beauty, of harmonious magnificence.

Past and gone is the splendour of the mighty Mogul empire. Even during his lifetime Shah Jehan, the knightliest of Tamerlane's descendants, came to realise the evanescence of all earthly fortunes. A prisoner of his own son, he ended his days in the Saman Burji, the Jasmine Tower. But the name of the Emperor is still green with the laurels of immortality. Outlasting time, like the sublimest creation of his eventful life, imperishable as the Taj-Mahal, does his memory come down to posterity to-day.

Loyalty has outlived fame; love outlasted power.

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CHAPTER XXIII

BENARES

BENARES! For the Hindoo she stands for the gate of Heaven, the sacred city, that reeks of cow-dung, of the innumerable, inviolable kine. The seat of Brahmin hierarchy, the object of the pious longing of all believers, the chosen place of death and dissolution, Benares is the sanctuary of Hindoo religion. Millions hold her name in timid reverence.

Long before the beginning of the Christian era, the idols, the temples, the monasteries of the differing religions and sects of the Peninsula were established here. Benares is the focus from which Brahmanism and its many gods radiate. Here, in that grey antiquity, its priests—the pioneers of the narrowest spirit of caste — were preaching their hopeless doctrine of the eternal migration of souls. In revolt against the torturing concepts of a national

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creed overladen with gods, there came Buddha with the liberating, spiritualised, gentle, humane teachings which he preached, without caste distinctions, to the humble and the outcast alike. Out to the Gazelle Grove beyond the gates of the sacred city his disciples flocked to meet him; even the women and pariah found admittance.

For nearly a thousand years Buddhism maintained its spiritual supremacy in the Peninsula, until about 400 A.D. the untiring Brahmin priestcraft, threatened in its most vital interests, won back the sacred city under its influence, and once again raised it to the revered centre of its cult. Buddhism was soon wholly driven out of India. Triumphant Brahma raised his head anew—and therewith the spirit of the caste system.

If the pacific doctrines of Buddha had, it is true, been expelled from the north of India for all time, it grew strong and flourished mightily in the southernmost part of the Peninsula. Starting from Ceylon, Buddhism continued its victorious course eastwards until half the human race became its converts.

In the year 1780 Warren Hastings took possession of Benares for England. The sacred city never aspired to political power, just as she has never

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been the centre of a temporal state. From time immemorial the Mecca of India was content with the spiritual dominion of the Peninsula.

Amazing is the fact that, amid its countless temples and places of worship, Benares can no longer show a single monument of Buddhist times. Nothing here any longer records the golden age of Buddhism in the past. The footsteps of Buddha have vanished from his native earth, obliterated in the religious struggles that, though waged with spiritual weapons only, raged with ruthless implacability. They spared nothing. It was not only buildings of stone that fell before their onslaught; even from word and writings, from legend and tradition, the name of Buddha was so completely, so irrevocably eradicated, that hardly an Indian has any idea to-day that the Buddhist religion was once the predominating creed of the Peninsula. Had not the gospel of the kingly prophet crossed the boundaries of India, had it not won Ceylon, Thibet, the Malay Peninsula, Japan and China, Buddhism would have been extinguished without leaving a trace behind it in its native land. Only to the Cingalese and Chinese literature does the educated world to-day owe its knowledge of the doctrines of the great Founder of the religion and

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the clue to search for the keystone of the Buddhist creed on Indian soil.

Weather-beaten and grey with age, like her past, is the face of the sacred city. In the palaces, gnawed by the tooth of time, the history of its illustrious houses confronts us; and sombre is the tale it tells. Here the members of the family forgather when they feel their end drawing near. To bring his earthly pilgrimage to its close at Benares is the aspiration of every devout Hindoo; here the gates of heaven open to receive him.

The sacred Ganges washes the crumbling walls of the eternal city. In its muddy flood plague-stricken, dying pilgrims bathe to cleanse their sinful bodies before death, and drink its slimy waters that they may become clean within.

And the consequence! Abiding, unextinguishable pestilence. Benares is literally the forcing-house of plague and cholera. From all parts of the Peninsula the populace flocks hither; to every point of the compass it scatters again. The fatal contact with the plague-infected waters of the sacred river cleaves to the pilgrims and to their wretched rags. What in his credulous exaltation does the Hindoo care? Forearmed for death, it has lost its terrors for him after the atoms fashioned for joy or sorrow

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into his perishable body have once been sanctified by the river.

The population of Benares consists for the most part of pilgrims, Brahmins—and cows. The stock of the latter is probably the most considerable. You literally never escape from the cow-stall here, with the holy disciples of Brahma for its milkmaids. They milk the people, and the people offer sacrifice to the cows.

The whole of Benares is an everlasting coming in and going forth, hurrying and dying, an illimitable flood of humanity one wave of which wipes out the other, in which priestcraft is the only stable factor—an immovable breakwater to which the bathers cling lest they drown in the cesspit.

There she towers in front of us on the left bank of the Ganges, on a mass of rock falling away almost perpendicularly, the ancient, venerable city with its countless temples and mosques and the palaces of Indian princes! The magnificent dwellings of the lords of the land are interspersed by the sacred monuments—top-heavy, rotten, in the last stage of decay.

In the radiance of the clear morning light gleam the picturesque pinnacles and domes, glisten the towers and minarets. India's sun gilds every-

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thing—even dirt. How much woe, how much misery, do its rays conceal in the play of garish colour!

It is the early hours of the morning, more particularly, that are devoted to ablutions and exercises of prayer. Broad, shallow steps—the sacred ghauts—make it easy for the faithful to descend to the river.

I order my men to row me past the principal ghauts. Tightly wedged, the pious folk, men and women from all parts of India, are sitting here in their thousands in order to sluice the water for the remission of sins on their bare bodies over and over again. Their scanty rags are spread out beside the penitents. Brahmins and fakirs are squatting among the worshippers, in order to incite them by word or gesture to the more diligent observance of their sacred duties—true blood-suckers these, who drain the last halfpenny from the pockets of poverty! Sacred cows thrust themselves in between. In face of this blind fanaticism of the masses you forget what amazement means.

It was an exceptionally cold morning; all the more heart-rending was the sight of these trembling, weakly victims. But the certitude of finding favour in the sight of Brahma lends strength even to those

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too numb to suffer any longer to drag themselves down to the chilly waters; the comforting prospect of winning his favour makes even the sick and crippled forget their pains.

The instinct of self-preservation, with which as a powerful impulse our outlook on life has to reckon, seems to be wholly and entirely obliterated in the faithful. For the pious Hindoo assures himself that death cannot mean annihilation for him; for he lives in Brahma, and Brahma is the being of all things. If a man dies, only the existing form of his ego disappears, while countless others are always coming into being anew. The more sinless he departs from here, the nearer perfection will he begin his next earthly pilgrimage, and the more comfortable lot will be vouchsafed therein. The oftener and the more purified the Hindoo passes through the gates of death, the more illumined does his soul become, the nearer does it approach finality, everlasting rest.

From the Soul of all things—so the doctrine of the Brahmins teaches—sprang the world. And it was the outcome of Sin. Since, then, the world owes its origin to a sin, it is of itself sinful, corrupt, a place of sorrow, a labyrinth of pain. Therefore the instinct is innate in all living things to dissolve existence, to return to Brahma—the All in All.

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But far removed from the goal of its aspirations is the soul of even the most perfected man. To whatever virtues it may have aspired, a sinful earthly remnant cleaves to it. Yet the soul of the corrupt is threatened with a yet harder fate than the burden hitherto assigned him. In accordance with the burden of his guilt, he will be incarnated in a proportionately lower caste—maybe as sudra, or even as pariah; in fact, it may be that he has to take up his life on earth anew in the guise of some plant or stone.

In mingled exhortation and commination do the servants of Brahma lift their voices. On the one hand, they hold out the future mitigation of earthly fate; on the other, they chasten with impending terrors. Thus they keep the tortured spirit in anguished incertitude and themselves—in funds. The Brahmins stand for the visible embodiment of the world beyond. They alone on this side of the grave have knowledge and power, can open or bar the approach to the gods, have the right to invoke favour or disfavour on high. In far-off India, too, the parasite of simony battens on the soil of religious sentiment—that loftiest of all needs of the human heart.

When, after our row, we landed at one of the

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ghauts, the guide begged me to guard against my shadow falling on the worshippers, for fear lest the saving virtue of the ablutions would be brought to naught.

Their ablutions performed, the pilgrims hurry to the temples for further flagellation. I mingle with the flood of humanity aglow with the fever of asceticism. It was a day of peculiar sanctity, and the places of worship filled as I watched. Resounding and tossing swells the mob, heaves and crowds, and literally ferments. In sobs the hot breath forces its way from the breast of the worshippers and mingles with the oppressive scent of sandalwood and attar of roses. Men, women, and children thrust and stamp on one another, and many a trembling, decrepit old man leans with the last exertion of his strength against the wall, not to be trampled under foot by the fanatic, drunken mob.

The basis of the Brahmin creed is built up on a divine trinity—Trimurti — that symbolises a creative, a preservative, and destructive force, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. From these altitudes you relapse to drinking pestilential water and the adoration of virgin cows. And these cows yield sacred milk without—miracle of miracles!—ever having known love!

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In all temples and places of worship the ruminants of either sex are an offence. Their span of life begins and ends in the inner chambers of the sanctuaries, where they are fed and milked. Milk is the foster-mother of mankind, therefore the dispensers of this source of life are objects of idolatrous veneration. By means of all sorts of dainties the believers try to whet their sated appetite. On the threshold and in the courts you stumble over iron pots of savoury fruits and fragrant grasses. Every one reverently makes way for the sacred ruminants, and should a sacrilegious wretch dare to twist the tail of a bull or of virgin cow, it would no doubt go hard with him.

Not without paying your footing may you move about among the kine. At their feet the pilgrims writhe and wallow in the filth. A young woman, richly clad and deeply veiled, throws herself ecstatically in front of a zebu and anoints its hoofs from a silver shell. I admire the symmetry of her slender limbs, the sinuous grace of her movements, while I plainly hear the fervent whisper of the prayer she sends up to Brahma. Will he give her ear, or is it that he has no jurisdiction here?

The god, indeed, at the moment enjoys only the conditional reverence of his worshippers. It is true

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that they still regard Brahma as the creator of the world, but only as the higher being that has already completed his task. In far higher repute stand Vishnu, the gracious preserver of all, and more especially Siva, the dread destroyer of the world. In the most manifold embodiments and under most varied designations are those two all-powerful beings brought incessantly before the eyes of the believers. Side by side with them millions of subordinate gods populate the Brahmin heaven. According to the canons of caste they are worshipped as a matter of routine. This is the explanation of the numberless holy places where day by day crowds of pilgrims endeavour to win the favour of the deities by penance, sacrifice, pilgrimages, and prayer.

It is a cold-hearted, venal priestcraft that without purpose strives to kill, to petrify life-giving Nature.

They take me to the golden temple, the shrine of Siva, the most dreaded and therefore most revered of gods. Ranjit Singh, the splendour-loving Rajah of the Punjab, built it. In the inmost sanctuary dancing girls glide in festal rhythm in honour of the god, and, that his fortune may be perfected, the dancers are wedded to his image. Pious Brahmins take his conjugal duties in altruistic self-sacrifice upon themselves.

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In Siva's temple stand the most monstrous idols and—the most capacious alms-boxes. Here is the favourite haunt of Brahma's servants. Two representatives of the caste fascinated me by the lofty regularity of their features; but behind the fair masks lurked stealthy greed and deformed them, while their dark eyes gleamed as in overweening mockery. Involuntarily there occurred to my mind the profane comparison with the sacred apes of the adjoining Sivala grove, which in malicious spitefulness recompensed their worshippers, in return for proffered votive gifts, with the kernels they coughed up.

In front of the sacred courts loaf lepers, cripples, fakirs, and peddlers, who offer their hallowed wares for sale. In and out among these parasites the cattle graze about leisurely. These are fat kine only; they know naught of lean years. Everywhere, in the temples and the alleys, is the tinkle of their bells. Everywhere, in temples and in alleys, the worshipped animals keep flicking away numbers of vermin with their dirty tails. Here and there a ruminant is garlanded, but here it is not the *bœuf gras* that is being led to the slaughter-house. In Benares this fate is reserved for the devout.

In short, the shipwreck of human reason is final and complete.

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CHAPTER XXIV

THE MAHARAJAH OF BENARES

Dark and mouldering, like the breath of death, is the air overhanging the sacred city, that rises from the waters of the Ganges. In the course of my journey to the Maharajah of Benares the sombre scenes of yesterday pass anew before my eyes. You cannot call your life your own in this atmosphere of woe, of hideous spiritual servitude that makes a mock of all the dignity of man.

We pass through the most squalid quarters of Benares. My guide points out the denizens to me. "Bad girls," he remarks off-hand. And so these pitiable beings are settled and done with in two words, so far as the pallid virtue of the rascally guide is concerned.

Even under altars do serpents hide. Cannot a clean soul dwell even in a painted body? How much more just is public opinion in Japan!

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Slowly the comfortably furnished boat of the prince bears me down the Ganges.

On the high banks, in endless tiers, rise the sacred shrines. Grimacing images of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva glare their menace down upon us—typical outcome of the gloomy religious beliefs of the Orient. In sharp antithesis to the works of classical antiquity, that strove to endow the dwellers of Olympus with the majesty of the human frame, sculpture here endeavours to depict its gods in terrifying malformations.

In the Greek view of art the expression of the highest worth, of festal exhilaration, the glorification of the ideal attributes of heroism, designed to inspire ennobling and uplifting thoughts, to wing the spirit to unconfined, loftier endeavour; here a people in the servile thrall of monstrous presentments, of eerie traditions, of uncanny legends, debased to idle morbid introspection, degraded to the unworthy part of abiding spiritual subjugation.

We slip past ghauts—past the thousand-headed Hydra writhing horribly towards the muddy waters. Poverty and hunger, pain and sickness, all the horrors of the lowest depths, raise their heads. And over all, heavy as lead, weighs the pressure of hollow-eyed, barren Asceticism.

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Old and young, rich and poor, without distinction of caste, are praying, bathing, and burning their dead. I order my men to row the boat towards the bank to watch a cremation. The next-of-kin conducts the ceremony in accordance with the strict ordinances of Brahmin ritual. In long-drawn ceremonial the soulless ritual takes its course. They haggle with the priests for the price of wood and other wares. Then the flames shoot up round the naked corpse. A rattle as of little mortars; the reaction of the gases in the dead body liberated by the action of the fire. The earthly remains soon shrivel down into a little heap of ashes. They are strewn over the sacred river, and without visible signs of mourning the lucky heirs leave the ugly spot.

A crackle of fireworks, and thereafter an evil-smelling darkness.

Masterfully palaces tower out amid the endless world of monuments along the Ganges. Ruinous, deserted, and silent, they stand there, haunts of death where the lords of the land resignedly await the end. Weeds thrive apace in the gaping window casements. In front of the gates are heaps of broken crockery and refuse. At the feet of the mighty walls Hindoos are squatting at the water's edge. You see them dipping their heads into the river, and drawing the

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stream in their hollowed hand to lap the hallowed water reverently. Absorbed in their pious exercises, they do not notice either the scarlet boat of the Maharajah or the watermen in the red liveries propelling it.

Anon we meet a floating corpse, on which the crows are enjoying themselves. With carefully guarded nostrils we allow the carcass of a cow to drift past us as well.

My servant tells me that the poor, who cannot afford cremation, deliver the dead bodies of their kith and kin to the river without cremation. The Ganges, too, takes over the priests and the sacred kine immediately after death.

The British Government would no doubt have the power to amend these insanitary observances. But Calcutta is wise enough not to conjure up storms without compelling need, and only to interfere where vital interests of the Empire are at stake, or the sacred cause of humanity commands it. Thus British law rigorously made an end of the burning alive of Hindoo widows on the funeral pyre of their dead husbands, as it also put a stop with the utmost rigour to the ghastly murder of female children—which every year delivered hundreds of thousands of victims to the sacred Ganges.

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In all Government measures the purpose is manifest—to maintain and to promote British power, British authority, and British justice. Government takes measures for peace and security; it ameliorates the conditions of life for the people of India, enhances the productiveness of the Indian soil, and makes the paths of trade and commerce smooth. But it never wantonly offends the sentiment of its subjects. It carefully avoids laying hands on their social institutions, their habits, and their customs, let alone the exercise of their religious rites. By these methods alone was provident, wise statecraft able to crown the work of Western civilisation with the touchstone of the success that unfaltering courage and marvellous endurance had won. Of signal bearing, indeed, is the triumph of English policy in this motherland of blind fanaticism, that opposed all reforms and innovations with ingrained superstitions and an obstinacy impossible to prevail against because of its very inertness.

What a mighty work of civilisation! What in face of its blessings do rotting corpses and putrid carrion count? For here, after all, the sun of India vicariously performs the duties of disinfection.

I land at Fort Ramnagar, and mount one of

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the prince's elephants that is waiting to convey me to the palace.

In a hall as big as a public square, the Diwan, the prime minister receives me. According to Indian custom, they hang chains of silver paper round my neck in token of hospitality and sprinkle me with scents. The fragrance of attar of roses and sandalwood furnishes the constant atmosphere of every Indian of distinction. The Maharajah now appears. His genealogical tree is believed to date back to the dawn of time. For, according to tradition, one of the Wise men of the East who brought gifts to the infant Christ is alleged to have been a Maharajah of Benares. The personality of the prince indicates Oriental dignity and repose. He raises his hand in greeting, and, eyeing me suspiciously, scrutinises me with a searching glance. Then a courteous smile lights up his features, and therewith the teeth of his Highness, stained reddish brown by his addiction to betel paste, become visible. As a Mohamedan, Prabhu Voram wears a round silver fez. The rest of his dress is a long black frock-coat without insignia of his rank, riding breeches of English cut, and—yellow slippers.

The Rajah leads the restful life of a millionaire relieved of worry. England has taken the burden

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of government from off his shoulders. The Indian magnates have doffed the purple, and of nights, like other mortals, enfold their sovereign limbs in pyjamas. No insubordinate parliament disturbs their rest. They have no anxiety for their subsistence, and as many wives as they care to own. They are not bothered either with Latin or with mathematics. England speaks, does their accounts, fights their battles for them. English guns protect their capitals and fire their salutes.

England respects their sovereign rights and shoots their tigers for them.

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CHAPTER XXV

CALCUTTA

THE palaces are wrapped in sleep. The precincts of Mayfair have pulled down the blinds. The residence of the Viceroy stands deserted. His Excellency has left Calcutta and has migrated to Simla, and with him his court, a host of officials.

Every one who is any one has followed the Vice-regal sun. A few independent souls have taken their own line to romantic Darjeeling; the fewest of all have stayed behind in Calcutta—people whom the world of fashion in its restless pursuit of pleasure would hurry past with an evasive clasp of the hands, but every one of them a personality of importance, a king within his own borders.

Regardless of the general exodus, in spite of a climate murderous at this time of year, the men who work hold out at their workshops. Merchants, engineers, physicians continue to direct and carry

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on their responsible duties at their peril. The kindness of my host introduces me into these circles. He himself was the head engineer of a big firm for electric installations. A short time before my arrival in Calcutta I made Mr A. S. Stanley's acquaintance, and without much in the way of preamble he invited me to put up at his house. There is nothing to beat English hospitality—this sympathetic hospitality of silent meals and hearts—without effusiveness, immune from the interchange of banalities.

The house of my worthy host is equipped with every imaginable appliance against the heat of summer. But neither electric fans, hermetical exclusion of the flaming sun, nor sluicing the walls down with cold water succeeds in lowering the heat appreciably.

Mr Stanley's family is in England for the time being. Silence reigns in the comfortable, spacious building; deathlike stillness in the big drawing-rooms. The piano, never missing in any Anglo-Indian household, is mute. The Indian butler, with his army of subordinates, it is true, does his office efficiently and intelligently: kitchen and cellars are well ordered; but you miss the hospitable attentions of an English mistress of the

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house, and therewith the cosiness of an English home. Paternal, no less than maternal, duties have called Mrs Stanley away; for the busy head of the family has no time at all to spare for private concerns.

Children, who have outgrown infancy, succumb to the Indian climate in course of time. Schooling and education urge their claims. A painful sacrifice this,—often enough lifelong separation—especially for the parents. While the father has to hold out for years in exile before he dares to think of a short furlough, the anxious mother pays visits home at shorter intervals. Then she shares the lot of her husband again in every quarter of the globe, at every time of the year, whether in the unhealthy atmosphere of big towns or amid the privations of remote jungles.

Almost the whole year round the women too live in camp there. At the earliest morning hour they set about their day's work, and only after a tireless round of duties do they seek their well-earned rest, contented in their lot. You never hear the Englishwoman complaining—not even of boredom. She finds something to interest and to amuse her everywhere—in her house, in her social life, in her games and recreations. And if we must perforce award the

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palm for self-sacrificing devotion to duty to the Anglo-Indian woman unconditionally, yet we cannot withhold the tribute of our admiration from her husband. For he must be made of the stuff out of which heroes are made, this pioneer of civilisation, who has to be at one and the same time a diplomatist and a missionary, an administrator and a soldier, whose life means a succession of self-sacrifice and self-denial, who every day sees his life threatened by fever and dysentery even more than by the incidents of war.

While I devote myself to leisured ease, I can hear Mr Stanley at work in the adjoining room with his Indian secretary. The latter is a very important personage, the chief of staff to his commanding officer, the connecting link between him and his numerous forces. Though my host speaks Hindustani perfectly, direct communication between himself and subordinates is hardly possible, even in the case of the most experienced authority on Indian affairs. The national customs, the canons of religion and caste, are too intricate to allow it. They have laid down the most meticulous rules for the relationships between high and low, and most rigorous safeguards for the rights of the individual. You have to know the innumerable threads very accur-

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ately to pull the right one, to know the troublesome Indian mechanism inside out to find your way about this maze. Just as every caste has its privileges it has its definitely defined duties as well; and the rights and obligations of the individual, as well as the ordinances of his status and religion, are everywhere observed with scrupulous conscientiousness. Even in the army itself commanding officers have to reckon with them. Although the time is past when Indian regiments refused to fire cartridges alleged to have been greased with cow lard, in how many aspects of military life have not the prejudices of Indian creed and dogma to be taken into account even to-day?

The Indian caste system looks back on a history of more than two thousand years. When Alexander the Great invaded India, he found its population already split up into castes. Their origin is of priestcraft and most closely interwoven with the roots of Hindoo creed. They embody inward and spiritual dominion as against outward and visible authority. Wherever the natives have coalesced into a federated state, as its necessary corollary the quarrel between priestcraft and temporal authority has ensued—the eternal struggle between Shogun and Mikado, between the pastoral staff and the

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sword. And yet the one would be powerless to maintain itself without the other.

When the kings went forth to war, it was the duty of the priests to sue the favour of the god by sacrifice, and to rouse the courage of the warriors by inspiriting chants. Handed down by oral tradition, these hymns—Brahmas, as they are called—were preserved as a sacred prerogative, and its guardians accordingly took the name of Brahmins. Thus arose the most influential and foremost of the castes, the Brahmin caste. Claiming equal rank, the representatives of knighthood—the kings, the rajangas, the maharajahs, and their descendants—attached themselves to it. The agricultural elements furnished in their turn a third caste, the Vaisyas. From among the rest of the population—the unfree, the menial classes, and the despised traders—the fourth caste, that of the Sudras, of the unclean, was formed. From those four chief classifications in the course of time innumerable subordinate gradations developed. Even the lowest among the Hindoos, with the exception only of the pariah, belongs to a caste, and conscientiously vindicates the conservation of his hereditary rights.

Even to-day the spirit of caste still exercises a powerful influence on the whole organisation of India. No peasant would take his meals with a

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sahib for fear of forfeiting his caste privileges. While eating his scanty meal he will take good care not to go too near the Viceroy. If an untoward chance ordained that the latter's shadow should fall across his meagre provender, the hungry stomach would have to deny itself the sustenance it craved. The upper classes, however, are emancipating themselves appreciably from the bondage of caste rules. To some extent the sahibs already sit at meat in the company of Europeans, ply knife and fork, and even allow themselves to be tempted to indulgence in a whisky-and-soda — to which beverage the old ordinances do not refer.

There is reason to believe that, as time goes on, the remaining elements of the population will gradually adapt themselves to Western influences. As it is, the public schools have already made short work of caste distinctions, and in the railway carriage the Brahmin has to make up his mind to sit on the same seat with a Sudra. Even marriage alliances outside of the caste occur, though only in isolated cases.

If the caste system has succeeded in keeping the Hindoo in a state of equable, leisurely passivity in the sense that it has imposed insurmountable limitations on individual ambition, it has, on the other hand, incidentally robbed him of every sense of personal

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independence, of every notion of vigorous individual initiative, and has irrevocably foredoomed the nation to become the easy prey of one conqueror after another.

Provided that his rulers in the course of successive centuries did not transgress the barriers of his inner life, the Hindoo cared little whose livery he might be wearing—whether Persian or Arabian, Maharatta or Mogul. Soft and dreamy, superstitious and lazy, without any stimulus to assert himself extraneously, the Hindoo is born to vassalage. He may, indeed, dream of a change of masters, but the thought of ruling for himself still slumbers in his brain.

In this land of immutable continuity every man remains what he is, unto the third and fourth generation. The proud scion of the Brahmins still, to-day as heretofore, pockets the fat tithings of his forebears; the poor devil, even were he a genius, has to keep the paternal treadmill going round. Everything is entailed on the son; privileges and burdens, honour and dishonour.

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CHAPTER XXVI

CALCUTTA AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

It is not the dead past that appeals to us in Calcutta, but the present—and the future. India's young capital tells a tale of British energy, of flourishing trade, of surprising endeavour. Just as Calcutta owes its existence to the spirit of English enterprise, so it was solely the prestige of the mother country that prevailed to promote the metropolis of to-day to its present important status. Chosen to be the capital of the Empire without regard for the economic or geographical drawbacks of its site, it did, in point of actual fact, develop into the focus of the expansion of Anglo-Indian rule.

Calcutta stands on the alluvial soil of the delta of the Ganges, only a few feet above sea-level. Its broad, rectilineal, clean streets, its numerous modern buildings, all bear an entirely Western stamp with which its, to a certain extent, thoroughly European

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population is in keeping. Wide expanses of lawns, which strike one as characteristic of the North, break the lines of the streets. Monuments of the heroes who devoted their strenuous lives to the service of their native country recapitulate the history of Great Britain. Modestly afoot, or proudly perched on prancing steeds, they have found an abiding resting-place, in bronze, on the green lawns reminiscent of their native land. Inspiriting models to their white brethren for whom they won India, they look down from their proud eminence on the parti-coloured crowds they have subdued.

India's latter-day history is the record of a succession of famous incidents, of brilliant deeds that can well afford to claim equal rank with the heroic episodes of antiquity, or with the annals of romantic chivalry in the Peninsula—deeds which England, without fear of being charged with vainglory, can afford to recall with justifiable pride.

Warren Hastings, Cornwallis, Wellesley, Bentinck, Auckland, Hardinge, Dalhousie, Canning, Lawrence, Lytton, Dufferin, Curzon, Kitchener—their memorials are milestones on the blood-steeped road that Anglo-Indian rule had to climb until it won the summit.

In the centre of the town lies the Viceregal palace, an extensive palatial building of modern style. If its

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artistic value may to the captious eye of the professional critic appear a more than doubtful quantity, grateful memories of Lord and Lady Lansdowne's kindly hospitality preclude me from pronouncing a disparaging verdict on its neo-Classical walls. It remains indisputable that the impression it leaves on the native who gazes at the massive bulk of the monumental building is overpowering.

The seat of the Viceroy breathes the air of the handsome Wellesley Square that surrounds it and commemorates the name of its famous sponsor. Within this setting of public gardens are furthermore grouped—inspiring and stately—St Paul's Cathedral, the Town Hall, the splendid halls of the Council of Bengal and of Justice, and innumerable other specimens of architecture, temples of art that have sprung up in rich luxuriance in this Athens on the Ganges. The interior of the cathedral is rich in monuments, statuary, and inscriptions which piously keep the memory of the founders and champions of British rule in India alive.

Within the area of the city itself, on the other hand, the typical landmarks of Calcutta's famous history have almost entirely disappeared. The old Fort, too, and the "Black Hole" of evil memory—a narrow, dark cell in which 146 British colonists once

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died the death of the martyrs—have had to make room for more contemporary buildings. A marble column on its weather-beaten plinth preserves the hideous memory of the tropical June night which those luckless fugitives, surrounded by a mob thirsting for their blood, had to spend, wedged into that airless space. Only twenty-three lived to see their rescue on the morrow.

Macaulay, who has depicted England's fight for India so arrestingly and graphically, who has made the heroic figures of Clive and Warren Hastings really live before our eyes, has with appalling realism handed down the tragedy of the 146 to posterity. Led by the hand of the great historian, the great mass of the English people for the first time entered on the magic world of India—on a land of glancing high-lights and dark shadows. With convincing eloquence his pen brought home to young and old in the motherland that for daring courage and self-denial India still had awards other than an enlarged liver to bestow. Four years of his strenuous life did Macaulay devote to his studies of the land and people of the Peninsula.

"You have to read Macaulay to get to understand India, to be able to appreciate the significance of England's work of civilisation there," Baroness von

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Heyking, the accomplished wife of our German diplomatic representative, told me when, in the year 1891, I was privileged to enjoy the hospitality of her beautiful home in Calcutta. How fond I am to-day of recalling the happy days I spent there! Thanks to the sympathetic intellectual individuality of its pretty mistress, the German consulate-general was one of the chief centres of attraction for the social world of Calcutta. The Viceroy and Lady Lansdowne were never tired of acknowledging what an invigorating social centre the von Heykings' house was.

To the pleasant relationships between Government House and the German consulate I was, too, indebted for the delightful drives in the country round on Lord William Beresford's coach.

Indelible are my recollections of an excursion to the famous Botanical Gardens, with their incomparably beautiful palm groves, their wealth of orchids, their limpid pools covered by lotus and Victoria regia—never to be forgotten, too, the galaxy of beauty that, like brilliant flowers, graced the coach of that universally popular sportsman. And the fairest flower of all was Lady Evelyn Fitzmaurice, the Viceroy's eldest daughter.

I wonder whether it would be presumptuous to

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ask whether her Grace the reigning Duchess of Devonshire remembers that drive after these many years? I have the liveliest remembrance of her, not only for the kindness she showed me, but because she talked to me in my mother-tongue with an ease and fluency I have rarely, either before or since, met in India.

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CHAPTER XXVII

DARJEELING

We are suspended between precipices and whizzing through the air. On the crest of a mountain ridge falling away sheer on either side, the railway describes its giddy curves and awful zigzag course. We are revolving round our own centre as on the spirals of a corkscrew staircase; we are prepared to be dashed to pieces on the rocky wall staring us in the face, where the line, in a curve so reckless as to take one's breath away, winds over gaping fissures into the rocky defile of a valley. And, further on, the iron stallion snorts its irresistible course to the heights. Wondrously has human enterprise triumphed over the Titanic opposition of the mountains here.

What a whirl of impressions is crowded into the twenty-four hours of railway journey between Calcutta and Darjeeling! The endless expanse of the Indian plains, with their luxuriant fields of cotton,

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of poppies and of croton, their light-green groves of bamboo, their plantations of cocoanut palm, watered by muddy, fertile river courses, the hill country, the twilight of primeval virgin forests, mountain ranges that storm the heavens.

The line bores its way into pathless forest thickets. Below, in glowing sunshine, rich pulsing life, teeming crowds—white and coloured—a babel of tongues. Here, in these radiant solitudes, Nature's silence. Parrots and monkeys are the only disturbing elements. At times the line crosses clearings for the cultivation of quinine. Then another fastness of giant timber, which no axe has yet touched, engulfs us. Only the climbing plants, like monstrous snakes, have accounted for many of the giants in their deadly embrace. Shorn of strength and colour, they stand there stripped of their leafy pride.

The meagre settlements at which we stop owe their being to quinine and tea. Just as coffee was originally imported into India from Arabia, the quinine tree of America and the tea plant from the Middle Kingdom were imported into India, where all three are well established to-day. The revenues of quinine-culture, so they tell me, are the most profitable. Hurrah for fever!

On our road, that is always mounting higher and

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higher, we are soon leaving the tree-tops of primeval forest behind us in the depths. A rigid world of rocks rises all round us. Man has mastered their once proud inaccessibility to-day. Towers, forest, valleys, cloaked in wreaths of mist, vanish, far below our feet, from our gaze. In the distant haze the towering splendour of snow mountains.

We climb the tableland of Darjeeling. The town, built on a flying buttress of the Himalayas, stands 6000 feet above sea-level. I lose no time in securing a place near the fire, for the evening is undoubtedly chilly. Only a few hours ago you were grilling in the heat.

Our hotel is full of visitors. In every language rises the question, "Will 'he' be visible to-morrow?" For the mountain giant does not always show himself, and not often in his full splendour.

It was vouchsafed me that my eye should possess itself of his sublime beauty—I was permitted to see him in his majesty, this sovereign in silver mail whom Nature in a stupendous demonstration of her power has raised to the throne of heaven, whom she has crowned with the purple aureole of the dawn and a diadem of stars by night.

Sublime Kanchanjanga! Thy virgin snows are still undesecrated by foot of man. Only the clouds

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caress thy hoary head, the sun alone dare kiss thee.

In bold consciousness of his strength, the king of the mountains shoulders his way into eternity, a boundary stone between two worlds—a patron saint of Aryans and Mongols alike.

All zones of vegetation, from the tropical to the arctic, pay their homage to the chieftain surrounded by a court of sparkling peaks and gleaming crests, by an ocean of ice-coated rocks. He is the nearest of all to heaven.

How small one feels, how puny beside this giant who looks down immutable from his awful heights on us poor midges from life's lowlands!

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CHAPTER XXVIII

LUCKNOW

THE place of sombre memories, the scene of England's bloody fight with the Islam of India—Lucknow! Here the kings of Oudh kept their court, but one really cannot call their palaces to-day an adornment to the scenery of the beautiful capital of the province.

Most of these buildings originated from the inner consciousness of a French corporal. Claude Martin, a native of Provence, reached Pondicherry with the troops of the French colonel Lally in 1780. His adventurous career enabled him later on to climb the ladder of military promotion to its topmost rung. He rose to be general commanding-in-chief of Oudh, and here finally took the added duties of architect-in-chief on his sturdy shoulders.

The Kaisar-Bagh, a monumental building of clumsy over-elaboration, combines Western lines with

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Oriental style into a grotesque effect of bulk, to which a wealth of barbaric ornamentation, of stucco and gilding gone mad, is oppressively superadded. In its tasteless ostentation the palace furnishes a striking object-lesson of the monstrosities the conjunction of illimitable resources and a dearth of any sense of beauty can perpetrate. Here you see domed roofs and Chinese belfries, Moorish arches, adaptations of Italian Renaissance, and minarets jumbled up together —a variegated concoction of odds and ends, like the *bouillabaisse* of the worthy Provençale.

Yet, in addition to these excrescences of his martial imagination, this pinchbeck Napoleon bequeathed to posterity one institution that still has claims on our gratitude—the Martinière, a school for boys, to the foundation of which he devoted the whole of his considerable fortune. It was only as an artist that the honest fellow was a sinner.

A landmark of British heroism, a dumb witness of storm-tossed times, blackened by the smoke of gunpowder, the old Government House rises amid flower-spangled gardens. Even to-day the former seat of the English resident at the court of Lucknow stands under the shadow of the reign of terror of 1857, its walls riddled by the hail of bullets, traces of fire and sword over all. Most

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affecting and impressive by force of contrast with its lovely setting is here the sombre, grand spectacle of these ruins.

Here for weeks the handful of Europeans in the town and the weak garrison maintained a desperate defence against the bloodthirsty fanaticism of the mob, who gave even women and children no quarter. Here Lawrence and Havelock died the death of heroes. Simply and plainly, just as, without pomp or circumstance, the heroes fulfilled their soldier's duty, unadorned stone tablets on the green carpet of the lawn announce:

"HERE SIR A. HAVELOCK DIED JULY 4, 1857";

and

"IN MEMORY OF MAJOR-GENERAL SIR HENRY LAWRENCE."

More imperishably than in letters of gold are the names of the heroes, who with their blood won India back for the mother-country, engraved on the hearts of the nation.

Sacrifices such as these are the price British glory had to pay—sacrifices such as these it is that inspire and stir patriotism into kindling flame; to them it is that England's sons owe the inspiriting thought of citizenship in a world-wide Empire. For not con-

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fined to India's soil alone are the deeds of British valour—they have chosen every zone of the globe for their scene. Had the triumphal progress of Great Britain's colonial policy produced nothing beyond this one and sole result, it alone would suffice to stand for England's signal justification.

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CHAPTER XXIX

DELHI

DELHI! The name sums up the pomp and power of bygone days. Its history is no less the story of India than it is the history of the whole of Asia. As early as the Middle Ages its fame far outshone the boundaries of the old continent; for centuries its splendour turned the heads of the Western world.

No city on earth can hope to eclipse the fame of Delhi. If Rome was the centre of ancient Europe, Delhi was the metropolis of Asia. Just as, in the changes and chances of ages, the Eternal City more than once fell before the onslaught of barbarians, so the Imperial residence built on the banks of the Jumna became the prey of ever new conquerors. For did not Delhi count for ages past for the palladium with whose destiny the fate of the Peninsula was linked? England, too, did not feel her sove-

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reignty of India unchallenged until the memorable day that saw her flag flying from the walls of Delhi.

Under the name of Indraprastha, Delhi goes back to the grey dawn of Indian legends. It furnished the most coveted prize of victory to the warlike ambitions of the hordes of Central Asia, who, allured by the splendour of India, flooded over the Hindukush. Here the decisive battles were fought, here blood was most freely shed. But all too soon did the conquerors exchange the shirt of mail for silken robes—all too soon did they take their pleasure in peace beneath the palm trees. New conquerors broke in and expelled the degenerate rulers. Delhi tells the tale of the Asiatic migration of peoples; wave upon wave has left its mark here—but only on ruins.

The city of to-day traces its origin back to the Mogul emperor Shah Jehan. The old quarters of the town—more especially the Citadel and the mosques—bear the indelible imprint of the mighty Mohamedan rulers.

Surely in no city on earth—not in Rome itself—are the linked memories of bygone dynasties so thick as here, the accumulation of the monuments of so many different generations so vast. Miles

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of heaped ruins tell us the stirring story of the splendour of the whole of Asia during the Middle Ages—an archæological museum of limitless extent.

What fairy-tale treasures were squandered here, how many human lives sacrificed, how many countless skeletons lie bleached on Delhi's plains! Every foot of earth all about is steeped in the blood of Afghans, Persians, Mongols, Indians, and Britons.

In the Citadel, uprising in proud defiance, the one-time seat of the all-powerful, splendid Mogul empire, Asiatic pomp and power confront us in their most impressive embodiment.

Delhi's royal castle, called the Fort to-day, occupies a whole quarter of the town. It rises aggressively behind its defences of ramparts, towers, moats, and drawbridges, to a lofty height. One generation of rulers after another has, in the course of centuries, added, for defence or vainglory, ever new buildings to his residence.

The pink sandstone of the palaces stands out gleaming against the blue sky—every building a gem of Indo-Arabian art, that reached its highest phase when the Mogul emperors played its Mæcenas. The Divan-i-Khas (the Hall of Private Audience), the Divan-i-Am (the Hall of Public Session), and

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the Moti-Masjid (the Pearl Mosque) blaze with dazzling light in the crown of Delhi's fame.

We walk through the palace, where harmonious beauty blends with marvellous effectiveness with untold splendour—airy colonnades, halls of state, courts where the white marble walls in their gorgeous sheen of colour seem to be interlaced with a tracery of gay flowers and scrolls outlined in sparkling jewels.

In the Divan-i-Khas the guide points out a stone lattice, behind which the Empress and her women were wont to attend State receptions. A marble pillar in the centre of the court marks the former site of the far-famed peacock throne of the great Moguls. Its place is empty; the throne has disappeared—past and gone, like the beauties of the harem, like the whole joyous pageantry that once tenanted the palace. Brooding solitude keeps silent court to-day.

Tradition alone has preserved the unrivalled splendour of the Imperial throne. Two peacocks with tails outspread formed the back. Their plumage was fashioned of precious stones of inestimable value. With Nadir Shah this magic work reached Persia. The Sultana of Delhi, too, became the greedy conqueror's loot.

The snowy-white Pearl Mosque, dating from the

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seventeenth century, is the work of the Emperor Aurungezebe. In the bewitching gracefulness of its exterior lines, in the amazing costliness of its interior adornment, the mythical glamour of Western legend becomes sublime reality. The impression conveyed by the Moti-Masjid in miniature is repeated on a larger scale in the Jama-Masjid, the Red Pearl Mosque, lying outside the Citadel, in the wonderful harmony of its proportions and its grand, harmonious, priceless simplicity.

The Jama-Masjid has room for ten thousand worshippers. It is the biggest mosque in India, the goal of every pious Mussulman's aspiration. Saracenic in conception, it betrays Indian art in its execution. Shah Jehan, it is true, based its plans on the religious ordinances of Islam, but the artists who brought it into being were Hindoos.

Broad flights of stairs ascend on three sides to the platform of rock that supports the Jama-Masjid in proud isolation. Splendid portals, slender minarets, prepare one for the magnificence of the interior of the main building. Colonnades enclosing a court of two hundred square yards throw the view open in endless vistas. Turned towards Mecca rises the red sandstone mosque. As an architectonic whole an overpoweringly impressive picture.

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Refreshing coolness greets one in the sacred courts. Designed to inspire a joyous note of exaltation is the majestic harmony of its lines, the airy grace of the arches striving heavenwards. Enthralled, one's eyes feast on the alabaster embrasures of the windows, on the ornamentation of the marble recesses and columns elaborated as delicately as jewellery. Admirable indeed is the art that contrives to fashion dead matter to a semblance so full of life.

At the portals of the shrine beggars stretched their skinny arms out towards me. They live on the strangers; for there is no living to be made out of the lachrymal ducts of their compatriots. India's soil has never been productive of the tender plant of pity, and like overfed gods the rich Hindoos pass the misery of their fellowmen by on the other side; the British intruder ministers to it.

Indian mendicancy is innocent even of rags—it is naked. Skin and bones tell their dumb tale eloquently—only the infant whimpers softly at the shrivelled breast. They do their begging with their emaciated bodies, these figures of misery, with their hollow eyes that mirror a world of woe.

Fakirs, those excrescences of Brahminical idolatry, those repulsive representatives of the blackest pessimism, desecrate the exultant note of the shrine. Here in

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the forecourt of the mosque you see them in the full flower of their degradation, the hideous ascetics who embody the warfare between the material and the spiritual into a repellent spectacle—rude turnkeys of the torture-chamber, who insensately kill the divine spark of warm, glad, sensuous joy, who degrade body and soul to expressionless, pallid phantoms.

Wholly naked, face and body overlaid with a deposit of ashes, dust, and sweat, hair rolled up into hideous knots, they hardly retain any semblance of the Divine image, not even of a Brahmin divinity. The ingenuity they devote to the invention of ever new tortures is amazing. Not only do they pierce their tongues with red-hot irons, perforate their limbs with iron hooks and hang suspended head downwards in pendent agony, they have themselves buried out of hand to the neck in earth, or chained for their lifetime to a stake. Others, again, see particular merit in the oath never to use their legs for locomotion and thenceforward to move about, supported in squatting posture, on hands and arms. To take one's walk abroad with peas in one's footgear has its devotees too. For the most part, however, the holy men—women are not worthy of these intelligent exercises—lie dully huddled up, immobile as pagodas, on dirty heaps of ashes. Without the quiver of an

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eyelash they stare into the blinding sun, or into the flaring fire, which, to ensure enhanced chastisement, is kept up even on the hottest day. One asks oneself whether these handfuls of fleshless bones, of vanished limbs, are in reality already dead to all bodily feeling while here on earth? Half extinct, their glance strays unintelligently over the gaping crowd that surrounds them in reverent admiration; only every now and then a word forces itself from their bloodless lips—mildew, falling like poison on the teeming earth.

Sick at heart at the repulsiveness of these idle parasites, who, in the misery of their own making, insensately and without purpose, sacrifice their bodies to the worms, I turn away indignantly from the unworthy spectacle that none the less seems to elicit the enthusiastic approval of the passers-by.

"Only stupidity and curiosity pay them any attention nowadays," says my amiable companion soothingly, who had only a smile and a shrug of his shoulders to waste on the repulsive exhibition of his co-religionists. "And the outlook for religion in India is unfortunately not much more promising," continues the Hindoo aristocrat. "If, indeed, its outer forms are still preserved, the whole rotten structure must sooner or later fall in on itself, worm-

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eaten and undermined, as in any case it already is. Our religion is too paralysed by ritualism to respond to the needs of to-day. It is no longer able to hold out against criticism; it has lost touch with the times. Only the uneducated masses still swear by the old dogmas—thanks to mental inertia, to traditional habit, but not conviction. Our faith is being assailed by an ever-growing enlightenment that effected its entry in the wake of Western learning, rather than by Islam or by Christianity. Through all strata of the population European civilisation has already laid its mines. And not only for our nation does this destructive irreligion spell moral ruin; in this enlightenment of the masses a source of danger may lurk to threaten English rule in India—a danger more formidable than can menace her from outside foes. In the end, after all, not a single one of the foreign rulers," Enderbeer Singh concluded, "has been able permanently to maintain his hold on our country."

"Take the wholesome policy of English government into consideration, the individual superiority—in physique and morale—of the Briton in comparison with your conquerors hitherto," I urge. "Granted that the latter fell sick of the possession of India, the British race will show itself possessed

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of greater powers of resistance. Why? Because the Englishman does not settle here permanently, does not propagate his race in this country. Arabians, Persians, and Mongols, Spaniards and Portuguese, gave up returning home to their household gods. They founded new homes here, blended themselves with the native population into a new race, and cut themselves adrift from the motherland for all time. The native manner of life usurped the place of home customs. The soil of India, which proffers to mankind all the means of existence in luxuriant abundance and without effort, in course of time sapped their energy and crippled their spirit of enterprise. The Briton escapes these dangers. He recruits his family stock with new blood from home, and the time-expired Anglo-Indians, who bring the evening of their days to its close on their native heath, are replaced in continuous succession by uncontaminated newcomers. The Englishman preserves his nationality even in foreign lands. In his customs and habits, views and sentiments, he remains body and soul the son of the motherland through thick and thin. Physically as well as socially he contrives to maintain his unique position uncontaminated, even in foreign lands. He never suffers his iron limbs to relax in sloth; by his sports and his work he

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stimulates his hardy, enterprising spirit. By these means the Britons keep themselves tuned up to concert pitch, at the height of their powers—weighty factors which will enable them to master the treacherous, infectious diseases of young India's infancy, just as they succeeded in nipping similar ferments in the bud in the year 1857."

The incidents of that great insurrection show the Anglo-Indian in the greatness of simple heroism. Round the walls of Delhi, too, the struggle raged hotly, hottest of all round what is called the Ridge—an indented mound of rising ground, overgrown by low scrub, immediately over against the gate of the city. To-day a monument commemorates the names of those bravest of the brave who, hard pressed by fiftyfold weight of numbers, raised England anew to rule over India.

Britannia's fame stands here, soldered in bronze into the soil of India—a towering memorial of the new era above the ruins of the past.

From the height of this tower of victory the view embraces the old Imperial city. Proudly the old time-honoured fort rises above the sea of buildings—a rock round which, in the strife of nations, the surge of fierce battles has beaten and has left its mark. Crowned by its gleaming crescent, the

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great mosque tells us of the golden age of Moslem power. And glimmering all around lies the wide vista of scorched yellow plain that has seen the clash and struggle of nations in arms, and the issue of the fate of millions at stake—a distant prospect that brings before our eyes the history of centuries of bloodshed.

Fame-crowned Delhi, once the focus of Asiatic supremacy; to-day a shattered mirror of the destinies of India!

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CHAPTER XXX

RANJIT SINGH'S KINGDOM

PUNJAB, the sacred land of the five rivers. The Sutlej, Ravi, Chenab, Jhelam and Indus intersect this northern province and give it its name.

From the earliest times the rich productivity of the soil had created a civilisation and culture of rare splendour and completeness. The great wealth of water promoted trade and traffic. Productive, too, in its effect on its development was the influence of the many nationalities which, in the course of tens of centuries, irrigated the land of the five rivers. In constant succession new life always germinated on these centres of old Indian civilisation.

With Alexander the Great the intellectual advance of Hellenism penetrated so far as this. In the train of the Mohamedans, who broke into India by way of the Punjab, their creed too effected its entry. A long and glorious reign fell to the lot of the Mogul

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emperor of the tribe of Baber the Lion, who in 1526 subjugated the fruitful country. In 1748 the Afghans gained possession of it; in 1768 the Sikhs made it the focus of their expansion. After the death of their great king, Ranjit Singh, his kingdom, in the year 1849, passed permanently into the possession of its British neighbour. But Islam triumphantly outlived the changes of every ruler.

In the interval of barely a century after Mahomet had first come to the fore, his doctrine had—in addition to Arabia, Syria, and Palestine—won Egypt, North Africa, the Sicilies, Spain, and in the East the vast dominions of the Persian kingdom. In the north of India, too, it established its rule.

Islam appealed to the abstract mentality as well as to the sensuality of Orientals, and fanned their fanaticism into flame. It scorned all worship of images, and promised its votaries who had fallen in battle for the faith resurrection and eternal continuity of earthly bliss.

The strength of the Moslem creed lies in its monotheistic formula, a proud advance upon pantheism. Its lofty morality, inculcating valour, magnanimity, generosity, hospitality, and loyalty, bred a passionate impulse for action and stern self-control, although its ill-omened adoption of the principle of fatalism

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fosters intellectual inertia and dull resignation to the immutable will of Allah.

Until 1849 Lahore was capital of the kingdom of the Sikhs.

While still the viceregent of Afghan kings, Ranjit Singh governed the Punjab from here. Later, he raised Lahore to the capital of his mighty kingdom that in the end extended from the Sutlej to Peshawar, from Moultan to Kashmir.

For forty years Ranjit Singh was and remained England's loyal ally. Then a bloody struggle for his succession and two unsuccessful wars with Great Britain paved the way for the incorporation of his kingdom with the Anglo-Indian Empire. Ranjit's successor, at the time a minor still, was that Sir Dhuleep Singh who later became a celebrity. A baronetcy was conferred on him in England; he married an Englishwoman, lived in England, and played the prodigal there with the subsidies Great Britain granted him by way of compensation.

In the annals of the Peninsula this ephemeral state deserves a place of note. For it was the Sikhs who, in conjunction with the Maharattas, prepared the way for and brought about the downfall of the Mogul empire.

To-day the Sikhs—originally a religious sect,

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smelted together by the zealous fanaticism of their creed and by centuries of military discipline—are, together with the Goorkhas, still accounted the most dependable factor of the Anglo-Indian army.

In very many ways the face of the fair city of Lahore still retains the memories of its many rulers. The Mogul dynasties, above all, left indelible marks behind them. The warrior instinct of Akbar the Great is stamped on the mighty citadel. Stately palaces tell of splendour-loving Shan Jehan, the mosques of the Emperor Aurungezebe of the irreconcilable persecutor of the Hindoo faith. Ranjit Singh's government that succeeded the Mohamedan era commemorates itself—in sharp contrast to the fantastic creations of Saracenic art—in buildings of massive bulk. The palace of the king and the rich ornamentation of the mausoleum where his ashes rest bear eloquent witness to his power.

Its new masters, too, have left their mark in Lahore—churches, railway stations, and barracks.

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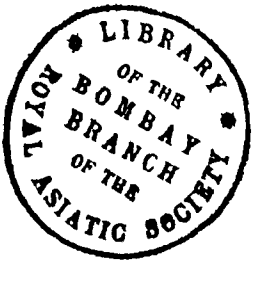

CHAPTER XXXI

INDIA'S ARTIFICIAL IRRIGATION

In the distance the white giants of the Himalayas appeared unbowed in Time's despite. Our train pulls up at Wazirabad. A little later we are crossing the Chenab river on a long iron bridge. Another achievement of the new era. "It is not classical buildings," remarked my travelling companion, a French tourist, at the time, "nor stately palaces, nor precious mosques, that in time to come will record England's rule over India. You will verify it by its ugly churches, railway bridges and lawn tennis courts."

The *entente cordiale* might perhaps have led one to look for a juster verdict, for even the most antagonistic partisans are unanimous in doing honour to England's sacrifices of blood and treasure for the development and progress of India.

"Haven't you noticed the many canals we have

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been crossing during the last twelve hours?" was my answer to the æsthetic criticaster. "Where classic structures have been lying in wrack and ruin for ages, this system of irrigation, vast alike in its inception as in its execution, will attest Great Britain's fame in the remotest future."

As in the East in general, the fertility of India's soil depends mainly on an artificial water-supply that has to make compensation for the scanty rainfall. In the long, dry summers the distribution of the water in terms of time and space plays an important part. The Mogul emperors were concerned betimes to reinforce niggard Nature with irrigation works. Calcutta not only revived these time-honoured traditions, but at immense expenditure created over the whole face of India a new system of irrigation which for extent and magnificence is not, even approximately, rivalled anywhere else. In the presidencies of Bengal, Madras, and Bengal, in the Punjab, in Scinde and the northern provinces, its length amounts at present to 300,000 kilometres. Thus new districts, amounting to more than 800,000 square kilometres—an area of twice the size of France—became available for cultivation. This businesslike control of the water-supply, which has transformed barren wastes into fruitful fields, and

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has called flourishing villages and trade and traffic into being in the heart of unpopulated deserts, is beyond all doubt one of the great benefits England has conferred on the pearl of her possessions.

And Calcutta's schemes for the future rise to yet more ambitious aspirations. No enterprise for the promotion of cultivation seems to be unfeasible to British engineering and financial resources. They have a scheme for collecting the weight of snows of the Himalayas in huge artificial lakes and for distributing it by means of conduits over the north of Hindustan. There is also another scheme for connecting up the Jhelam, which has a good head of water, and the Chenab, which is of considerably smaller volume, so that the head of both rivers can be regulated to meet the exigencies of any given season. With ever-growing energy are they getting at handgrips with the desert, and from all sides verdant meadows are pushing forward victoriously against the barren sea of sand.

The engine whistles in long-drawn shrieks. The train slows down and draws up at a station of some importance, Rawal Pindi, my destination. There is just time to shake hands with the Frenchman, for Paul is already calling my attention to an officer, whom he salutes with a deep salaam. It is

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Captain Cavendish, the aide-de-camp of the general commanding the North-west Frontier, who, as a brother officer, has come to meet me at the station, and now accompanies me to the residence of his Excellency.

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CHAPTER XXXII

RAWAL PINDI

General Sir Bindon Blood, the hero of Malakand, famous for his expedition against the fanatic Afridis, is the ideal of a commander and of an English gentleman. Imperturbable resolve and inflexible strength of purpose are written in his blue eyes—kindliness and benevolence distinguish the features of the general who has led the British forces to victory in the most important of Indian frontier wars. The forty years of his brilliant military career have not robbed his Excellency's stalwart figure of aught of the elasticity of youth, even if his hair and moustache have been prematurely bleached by India's sun.

The general is in command of the combined military forces of the North-west Frontier, from Pamir to Baluchistan—a country three times as big as Germany.

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[Photo by Walter Barnett

THE ENGLISHWOMAN IN INDIA

Mrs Clifton-Brown, wife of the Colonel commanding the 12th Lancers at Sialkot

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From afar the residence of the general officer commanding is to be recognised by the flag it flies. As if to make me feel at home, magnificent timber casts its cool shade over the rambling buildings; parterres of flowers exhale their fragrance. On the threshold Sir Bindon and Lady Blood bid me welcome.

My lucky star has led me into the house of a man whose force of intellect is only equalled by his kindliness.

Nor is Lady Blood one of the many who fare along the great highroad of commonplaceness. She is the happiest possible complement of the general's distinguished personality, and furnishes the harmony of his eventful life. In spite of her youth and beauty, her Excellency is the helpmate in all the cares and troubles, of all the labours and dangers, of her husband's responsible profession. Lady Blood personifies in its noblest aspect the prototype of far-famed Anglo-Indian womanhood, whose whole-hearted co-operation and wise, intelligent influence have promoted Great Britain's work of civilisation in the Peninsula in so marked a degree. Without the devoted support of their loyal, brave helpmates, the sons of Albion could perhaps hardly, for all their heroism and their tireless strength of purpose, have

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risen to the height of the achievements such as history can record to their credit. What would India to-day be without the Englishwoman, the guardian angel of hearth and home?

Eight happy days did I spend in Sir Bindon Blood's family circle, and to his universal popularity do I owe my kind reception in Rawal Pindi. Many very pleasant days were my portion among the officers of his command. Often and gratefully do I recall the kind offices of the commander of the 9th Hussars, Lord Douglas Compton, of Lord Frederick Blackwood, and of Captain Grenfell, the adjutant of the regiment, and the jolly hours at mess, on parade, or out shooting, or at some sporting fixture. I have delightful memories of Miss Cara Blood, the only daughter of my kindly host, of the delicate charm of her personality, and of her flower-like, dewy youth. I shall never forget the glorious rides to hounds in her merry company, when on the horizon gleamed the range of snow mountains, and the whole country was intersected by innumerable larger or smaller water-courses of the Cabul river.

I used to ride a mouse-grey waler, General Botha's gift to Sir Bindon, and a memento of the Boer war. The whole of Pindi knows the big, handsome waler. The guard turn out as soon as they catch sight of

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him, and on his back I had the honour of being mistaken for the commander-in-chief. For all his sixty years Sir Bindon Blood, in the saddle, was the youngest of us all, and a pattern to his young brother officers. Immediately behind him rode Miss Cara, her father's fearless companion. No obstruction is too high, no ditch too wide for her; Cabul river itself not too deep, and the pace never too hot. The boldest horseman cannot help but admire her nerve and presence of mind. Miss Blood has won laurels, too, on tiger- and bear-shooting expeditions. But at home the sportsmanlike votary of Diana fulfils her household duties as the commander-in-chief's daughter none the less zealously and conscientiously.

Only too soon for me the end of this jolly week approaches. A mask ball at the house of Lieutenant-General Wodehouse, commanding a division, brings the days of my Indian carnival to a close.

Ladies and men turn up in every variety of disguise. Nature and art had vied to furnish a picture of glowing colours. Its atmosphere is predominantly military. One charming young woman had adopted male attire. "Mrs Milward, British cavalry," Colonel Peake, his Excellency's chief-of-staff, pointed out to me. "Siege artillery," he

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observed later on, as a Maid of Orleans passed us. "And that little geisha?" "Mrs Hart; and, next to her, her sister, Mrs Riddell—Bikanir camel-corps."

Sir Bindon introduces me to every one. A handshake and a smile in passing. Greeting and good-bye in one. Lady Blood is indisputably the queen of the festival—bewitching for her charm of manner and the fascination of her graciousness. How well her handsome turquoise ornaments become her!

Every one takes an active part in the dancing. Side by side with gilded youth, white-moustached senior officers plunge into the fray. English society recks nothing of age limits—they leave it to Nature to retire every man at his proper time.

We all have a royally good time. Only, I am already mournfully conscious of my impending departure. But why be prematurely glum to-day when farewell is not until the morrow?

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A BELLE OF PESHAWAR

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CHAPTER XXXIII

THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER OF INDIA

THE last houses of Rawal Pindi disappear in the distance. Shall I ever see it again? But what will it be like without the dear Bloods? My thoughts hark back to them constantly, and I feel as if I had parted from old and trusty friends.

The skies grow grey. They are the first clouds of which I have been aware in India. Then showers of rain set in. But the sun soon regains the upper hand. In the north-east the gleaming glacier world of Kashmir, the solitary ray of light in an otherwise gloomy country, in this still-life picture of sand and stone. On all sides shattered basalt rock—no tree, no scrub, is to be seen. Only here and there in the gullies scanty cereals—too much to starve on, too little to keep life going. Towards evening we reach the banks of the Indus. Rising on the northern watershed of the Alps of

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Asia, it has since then flowed through the mysterious valleys of Thibet, swirled round the giant pillars of the Himalayas, and at this point traversed the half of the immense distance that divides its source from the sea.

Our train thunders across the iron bridge at Attock. Sheer from the river bank the town climbs a ridge of hill. It is dominated by the frown of the fort—that watch-dog which, since Akbar's times, has been stationed to stay the invader's greed. But before the English era the stronghold did not always prevail against the magnetic force of India.

On the further bank of the river extends the district proper of what is known as the North-west Frontier—illimitable in its extent from the Pamirs to Persian country. A zone of fantastically cleft mountain, of masses of towering rock, of deeply indented valleys, through which the rivers have churned their course to the great plain of India and to the ocean.

Here, for the first time, in face of the mighty mountain rampart that divides the Indian Peninsula from Asia, the typical character of the inhospitable frontier country becomes manifest. Savage and indomitable as Nature herself are its inhabitants;

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a breed of unbridled, warlike ruffians, addicted to robbery and murder, among whom the Afridis, the Mahmounds, the Waziris, and the Zakka Khels are the most reckless and indomitable. For generations these hill-men have lived for the business of war, have carried on highway robbery, and practised murder and sudden death. The terror of adjoining countries, they are also continuously at war against one another in bloody quarrels. The vendetta is the order of the day—neighbours are at feud from generation to generation.

It remained for English influence to introduce conditions of, comparatively speaking, law and order here—at any rate, within the radius of the great trade routes. With their great military stations—Malakand, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Dera-Ismail-Khan, and Quetta, which in their turn have pushed out small outposts into the mountains — as their base, the English were able to conclude treaties with the several tribes. In return for the payment of regular subsidies the latter pledged themselves to guarantee the protection of caravans passing through their country. Thus it became possible for commercial intercourse and traffic between India and Central Asia to develop from that time forward on the lines desired.

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If, in consequence, an expansion in the caravan trade growing day by day is to be recorded, and if to-day the great trading expeditions are able to convey their wares through the mountain passes unmolested, throughout the whole of the frontier district a considerable measure of insecurity still obtains. Foreigners cannot, without paying the penalty, always make bold to enter, without military protection, the country away from the roads secured by treaties. Every now and then the impudence of individual mountain tribes goes so far as to endanger the lives of Europeans, even in districts Great Britain has already taken over. In fact, even within the walls of strong garrison towns white men are occasionally murdered — either to secure the firearms that every one covets, or for sheer delight in robbery and bloodshed, or again from motives of religious fanaticism.

Last year the garrison of Bannu alone lost four officers by assassination within the town. As a consequence, the British are on a permanent footing of active-service conditions. They turn out for manœuvres with ball cartridges, and only bivouac under the precautions of war. The guard and the sentries, even in the larger garrison towns like Peshawar, Bannu, and Kohat, are stationed behind

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shelters loop-holed for rifle fire. The open ground in front of the barracks and sentry-boxes is, by way of added precaution, lit up at night.

To still greater degree are the advanced police stations imperilled. It is only under escort that the officers are able to leave their fortified headquarters to inspect their outposts.

The whole of the frontier district at present still resembles a fortress whose walls are continuously manned and whose troops sleep with their rifles within arm's reach, or like a ship cleared for action. Two-thirds of the whole of the Anglo-Indian forces are concentrated here in units of considerable strength. And yet Government eschews all intervention in force and all bloodshed as far as it can. Only pacific measures that bring the advantages of English suzerainty home to the natives by ocular demonstration can lead to the final establishment of law and order here.

It is not by means of fire and sword, not by overwhelming display of force, but solely by the just and judicious treatment of the tribes living within the English sphere of influence, by well-judged measures calculated to raise the general standard of prosperity, by skilful treaties and annual subsidies to influential chieftains, that a road through the mountains has

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been opened up to international trade and traffic. The purpose that could only have been partially attained by the use of military force, by disproportionate sacrifices of blood and treasure, and not without rousing the jealous suspicions of Russia and Afghanistan, is thereby adequately effected. Thanks to a wise policy, these rough frontier districts are to the naked eye becoming more civilised. Fruits of the earth of many kinds are already beginning to thrive where hitherto murder and sudden death were the only harvest. The population is gradually adapting itself to wear clothing as well as weapons, and to earn its daily bread by honest means.

Not far beyond Attock the railroad enters the valley of Cabul. Here the river that derives its name from the capital of Afghanistan pours its limpid waters into the turgid flood of the Indus. Fertile fields edge its banks.

We are approaching the destination of our long journey. Ever more overpowering the glaciers of the Hindukush rise in front of me. Our train glides into a big modern station. We are stopping at Peshawar, at present the terminus of the great Indian railway system. How long will Cabul continue to hold out against English wires and English rails? Peshawar lies in the country of the

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Pathans. Descent and language they have in common with the Afghans. Their country, too, shows no likeness to India. In fact, anyone who crosses to the right bank of the Indus might imagine himself transported into Central Asia.

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CHAPTER XXXIV

LORD KITCHENER

A COUNTRY that braces the muscles and stiffens the backbone. No gentle breezes fan Peshawar. Hot summers alternate abruptly with severe winters here. The country and the men bear the stamp of an abrupt and hardy stock. The palm trees and the gay magic colouring of the South lie behind us; behind us, too, lie the paddy-fields of Bengal and the orchard plains of Rajputana. We are worlds away here from gentle Hindoos, industrious Parsees, and the pomp of the courts of Indian princes. The chieftains of the North — stalwart, sinewy, grim-looking figures — do not rely on the magnificence of their garments to impress you. But you can tell by the look of them that they know how to wield the sword, to handle a rifle, that in a rude country they pursue a calling no less rude.

Their proud bearing is instinct with the uncon-

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THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, with his orderly, on manœuvres

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scious dignity of a people that from time immemorial have enjoyed the privilege of unrestricted liberty.

The history of Peshawar goes back far into the past. The town owes its historical interest as well as its prosperity to its site at the mouth of the Khyber Pass. For through this breach in the wall of the Himalayas the nations of the north — Scythians, Tartars, Arabs, Mongols, Persians — were aforetimes wont to pour into the plain of India. Peaceful caravans pass along the same road to-day as did these warlike hordes of old. Through the Khyber Pass runs the great highroad to Central Asia.

Peshawar resounds to the din of trade and traffic between Afghanistan, Persia, and Turkistan. Here the sons of Asia's deserts take their rest between their coming-in and setting-forth. Here they spend their grass-widowerhood, and here they succumb to the temptations and amenities of civilisation. What Paris is to us Peshawar is to them. There is money to be earned and spent in the town: work alternates with pleasure. A motley throng of strangers from all parts of Asia crowd the streets and alleys. But what has become of India? It lies on the other bank of the Indus. This is another world.

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I am, thanks to Sir Bindon Blood's kind introductions, here, as in every other garrison town of the North-west Province, the guest of the military authorities. They put me up and entertain me as a fellow-soldier in the most cordial fashion; they provide me with mounts, and furnish me with the requisite escort and guides for my expeditions into the interior. I meet with the most cordial reception everywhere; they take me over the barracks and the forts; they show me the troops in the barrack yards; I accompany them on their drills and their musketry practice. On all sides they assure me of their unreserved sense of good fellowship for the German army. Their respect and admiration for our warcraft were not empty words. Officers qualifying for staff appointments draw largely on German works on tactics and military history; no military library is without the studies on the South African and Russo-Japanese war, published by the German General Staff. Names like Balck and Freytag are current coin; on several occasions they made me talk about General von Lindenau, well-known by his books as the advocate of the firing-line formation which the Boer war evolved.

In Peshawar the hospitable courtesy of Lieutenant-General Sir Edmund Barrow put me up. He is

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looked upon as one of those men designed by special providence to be a potential successor of the present commander-in-chief.

Like Lord Kitchener, Barrow, too, is a disciple of the new school that aims at reorganising, training, and delocalising the Anglo-Indian forces in accordance with Continental principles. One or two senior British officers, who have grown grey in service in India, may, it is true, shake their heads at the scheme — and to a good many young gentlemen the "sportsman-like" methods of the military system adopted hitherto in India may have appealed more strongly. Many may perhaps regret the former stations in the heart of the Peninsula and in its most sporting centres; but they nevertheless unanimously recognise and admire the great military advantages of Kitchener's system. In the hero of Khartoum they all acclaim the fine flower of military India—the roots of India's future.

I am indebted to the commander-in-chief for the greatest cordiality on the part of all British military circles. They showed me their military organisation on the Peninsula, the colonial drill, the organisation and command of native regiments. I was also made acquainted with the many practical experiences of English soldiers in the matter of equipment,

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commissariat, and management of man and beast in tropical climates. How could I fail to express my acknowledgments to one of the most likeable and smartest officers of the Anglo-Indian army—Colonel Money, General Barrow's chief of staff? A real type of the British officer in India—keen and unassuming, experienced and hardworking, equally popular among his superiors as among his subordinates, and revered and admired fanatically by his native soldiers.

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CHAPTER XXXV

THE KHYBER PASS

The Agent-General of the North-west Provinces, Sir Harold Deane, crowned a kind invitation to dinner by a permit to visit the Khyber Pass.

With a military escort I trot off westwards. On my right the snow-clad ranges that connect the Himalayas with the flying buttresses of the plateau of Central Asia. These haunts of murderous savages seemed to be draped in white cerecloths. In front of me the frontier range of Afghanistan of to-day, overtopped by the glistening wall of the Hindukush. Millions of years are gazing down upon us from its icy heights. In the same quarter you see Fort Jamrud. An hour later we reach the foot of the hill that bears the fortress. It is like a big armoured man-o'-war, moored in the mouth of a difficult fair-way. Cannon flanks the historic defile through which the Macedonian, and after him the Mohamedan,

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conquerors invaded India. World-famed Khyber Pass, the scene of so many deeds, the witness of so many significant events, so rich in memories of every age!

I show my pass to the guard stationed in the fort and read the visitors' list; Countess Metaxas, Mrs Gwilm Scott—names that recall sunny days to my mind—Captain Hofmann, Comte and Comtesse Montgelas. I sign my name as the fifth of the company and enter the pass. It still reeks of blood and gunpowder.

Uphill, through a tumbled land of rocks, past enormous perpendicular blocks of stone, winds the road built by British engineers. Nowhere a trace of vegetation — only stone and sand in elemental force. Fortified towers at distances of every 500 metres crown the eminences along the road. These castle-like dwellings are more eloquent of the insecurity of the country than anything else could be. The sentinels of the pass, Afridis in English pay, are quartered in them.

Long caravans pass us continually. They hail from Cabul, Tashkend, and Central Asia. After delivering their wares, these animated kilometres, richly freighted with Indian and European goods, return home by the self-same road. Many of the

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beasts carry "made in Germany" goods. My column is repeatedly held up by those caravans—in the narrowest places, of course, on the brink of giddy precipices, where a slip would inevitably terminate our earthly pilgrimage. After a ride of three hours we reach Ali Masjid, an old-fashioned brick fort with a garrison of Anglo-Indian troops. Ali Masjid lies half-way to the frontier. Here the mountains begin to tower up to mighty heights, to exalt themselves above time and space into blue immensity.

We pass a few dwelling-places of the natives. They hang suspended over precipices, these rocky eeries of grim birds of prey that bequeath their appetite for murder and loot to their brood. Ever wilder and more stupendous the scenery becomes, but of oppressive melancholy. The road turns and twists in daring curves in and out between rigid walls of rock and yawning fissures until, at the highest altitude of the pass, it runs out into a broad basin. Here Lundi Kotal, as the furthest British outpost on the road to Central Asia, keeps watch and ward before the gates of Afghanistan. The garrison is composed of Indian troops under the command of an English officer. He is the solitary European on sentry-go at this world-forgotten outpost of civilisation. The young soldier's white uniform stands out conspicu-

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ously against its sombre surroundings. Alive to-day, dead to-morrow. Any day, as he goes his rounds, the bullet of some treacherous sniper threatens him. Completely cut off from intercourse with his kin, his life lacks every sort or kind of change. Even shooting and riding in the surrounding country, which certainly offers few attractions, are debarred him. The officer in command at Lundi Kohat, is, it is true, in telegraphic connection with Peshawar; but what would be the good of that if it came to business? Thrown back entirely on his own resources, his high spirits and cheerful sense of humour do not desert him. Kenneth Barge, lieutenant of the 17th Cavalry, is a sympathetic, most entertaining, and agreeable young gentleman. He seemed uncommonly pleased to be able for the space of twelve hours to look at a white man's face other than his own reflection in the looking-glass. Not that this young officer is only a soldier—a linguist, an ethnologist, and a cartographer, he is expected to make himself useful as a diplomatist as well. His life is no sinecure. He is continuously on duty: looking after the efficiency of his men, the needs of his subordinates, and the safety of the fort and its outposts. In solitude and monotony his days pass, and every hour brings its own troubles. But

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work and responsibility preserve his interest in life, and in the midst of this desolate solitude and benumbing isolation from the outside world he remains the cheery, smart guardsman of other days.

Tirelessly, in loyal devotion to duty, they build stone by stone to the glory of Western civilisation and to the greatness of their native land, these unfledged English officer boys. And should death call them from their work perforce, others follow them, unshaken in their rock-based confidence in the time-defying permanence of British supremacy. How often, even in England, do they speak disparagingly of the British subaltern! You ought to have got to know him first of all in India—for choice, on the North-west Frontier—to be able to judge him fairly.

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CHAPTER XXXVI

FORT MALAKAND

It was at Malakand that General Sir Bindon Blood fought his celebrated decisive battle against the insurrectionary tribes of the North-west. Here the bloodiest and longest-drawn of recent frontier campaigns which Anglo-Indian history has to record, was brought to an issue. Since this final victory of British arms these hill tribes have never dared to adventure on open insurrection on a large scale. But all the more bitterly do they resent it in secret. It needs only the most trivial pretext to stir their slumbering animosity. Here the individual is even less to be trusted than in the region of the Khyber pass. Fanatics attack their victims by night and by day, beyond the gates as well as within the walls of the fortress. Their deed accomplished, they are willing enough to let themselves be seized and hanged. To kill an infidel at the

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hazard of one's own life these mad dog Mullahs deem to be the most direct short-cut to Paradise. Nor is English tolerance least to blame for the incredible daring of these assassins. They would deal with them less tenderly in the north of Asia. They would neither hang them nor shoot them, but flog them to death, and sew them up in pig's skin and burn them. In accordance to Moslem creed the souls of those thus defiled can never attain to bliss on the other side of the grave.

I am living in the fort as the guest of the colonel of the regiment stationed there. Without undue effort of the imagination one might believe oneself in prison. Peep-holes and windows are barred; fully armed sentries, who only grant admission after giving the password, are stationed everywhere.

The bastions of the citadel present the imposing spectacle of high walls built of white sandstone. From these huge blocks of masonry, forming three of a square—on the fourth the mountain furnishes the wall,—the armoured gates abut.

For lack of accommodation I am sleeping in the colonel's orderly room. I shall never forget that night. At eleven o'clock a howling gale sprang up. The fort creaks to its very foundations; doors

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and windows threaten to burst open; the files of documents come to life. Never on the high seas have I experienced such violence of the gusts. "That's what happens to us every night," Mrs Wikeley, the colonel's wife, told me on the following morning. "For ten hours, from eleven o'clock until nine the next morning, the hurricane howls without intermission. It is the result of the great variation of temperature between day and night."

As Peshawar commands the Khyber, so Malakand commands the high road through the Hindukush. But the former town, which is more or less open, only lies in the mouth of that great breach in the mountain; Fort Malakand, built in the narrowest defile at the height of the pass, blocks the natural gap at its most sensitive point. All traffic has to pass through the gates of the fortress.

Colonel Wikeley escorts me to Chakdarrha, a little fort lying some thirty kilometres to the north on the road to Chitral. We lunch with the officers of the 46th Punjabis on duty there. In 1900 the 46th took part in the Chinese expedition. They show me pictures of the time of their brotherhood in arms with the Germans. In the anteroom hangs a photograph of Field-Marshal Graf Waldersee, with his chief of staff, General Freiherr von Gayl,

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of whose personal charm they could not speak too highly.

Chakdarrha lies in the valley of the Swat, a tributary of Cabul river. Its clear waters fertilise extensive tracts of fruitful soil that have reached a high state of agricultural cultivation. Rice more particularly is grown here. The irrigated fields remind me of the mountain valleys of Japan. From time to time we ride through little hamlets —wretched huts with a ragamuffin population. The men are hardly clothed, but all of them are armed to the teeth—with knife and revolver in their belts, and a rifle on their shoulder. The women, garbed in rags, present, it is true, a less martial aspect, but they are just as dirty. Swarms of naked children are playing about in the puddles. What a contrast to the luxuriant wealth of nature! "Swat is heaven," observes a Pathan proverb; "its inhabitants originate from hell."

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CHAPTER XXXVII

KOHAT

I RETURN for a night to Peshawar in order to ride further into the west from here.

General Barrow is away; I therefore spend the night at what they call an hotel.

The escort of the 17th Cavalry, told off to accompany me through the Kohat pass to the garrison of the same name, delivers me on the morrow from my unenviable quarters. We ride off along a plain towards the southwest. In front of us the spurs of the Hindukush — an Alpine landscape on an enlarged scale — overwhelmingly, overpoweringly, impressive. Only giants could feel at home here. My servant Paul is a walking *Baedeker*. "The ruins over there were once a fortification. They have seen bloody fights between the English and the Waziris."

In the landscape red predominates. You might

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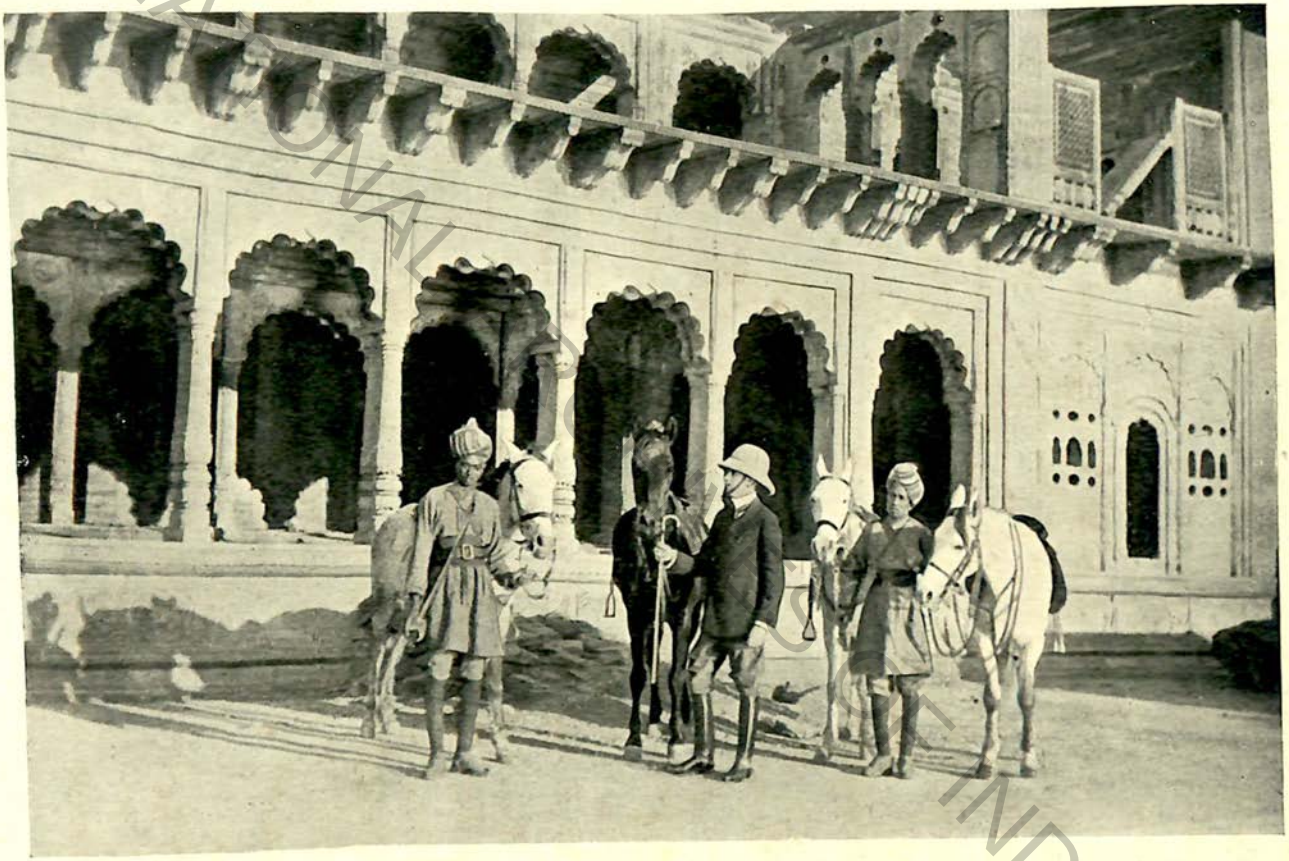

ON THE ROAD TO KOHAT

The Author with his escort of 17th Cavalry after an adventurous ride

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imagine the masonry and soil to be still steeped in blood. The death-like silence of Nature, the desolation and inaccessibility of the spot, the memories of the desperate conflicts between chivalrous foemen, invest the place with the glamour of heroism.

The road is broad, very steep at times, but in excellent repair—the great military road, the link of communication between all the principal garrisons on the frontier from the north to the south. "We can cut off a bit now," calls out my guide. "We can save two hours this way; our horses are good at climbing." And, as a matter of fact, they pick a way through this world of rock like tight-rope dancers. But the folly of leaving the beaten track for the unknown soon became most unpleasantly manifest to us. It is not long before the craft of our pathfinder is at fault. That, after hours of groping and straying about, we were at last able to steer our proper course, we owed entirely to the kind offices of the hill-men. Even in this land of sudden death there is a code of honour, in which the right of hospitality holds the foremost place inviolably.

"We shall have to look to the natives," the *ultima ratio* of our erring guide ran. Two Afridis are sent on to reconnoitre. "A German sahib, in respectful admiration for the Commander of the

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Faithful, begs Mohamedan hospitality and guidance." An hour later our emissaries return: they will bid me be welcome in an adjoining village; but they decline to receive my escort. At the soldier's advice I leave my gun and revolver behind me too.

On a steep, inhospitable mountain ridge the little miserable settlement stands, scattered kennels of stone and sods, protected by hedges of thorn. The Sheik receives us at the entrance to his realm. Otherwise only a few women and children are in sight.

"A devoted friend of the Padishah in Constantinople assures thee of his friendship," so Paul inventitively garbs my address. Two women in the meanwhile drag a decrepit bedstead forward. A rack, no doubt? The old man, with a lofty gesture, invites me to be seated. With some hesitation I take my seat between murderers and vermin. Before long the instruments of torture are produced: they hand me a pipe, and with a good grace—or, rather, with the best I can muster—I take a palpable pull at it, and pass it on. It goes the round, reeking, in token of friendship. "We shall be glad to guide the sahib to Kohat," begins the veteran in tremulous accents. "The sahib stands under our protection. Praise be to Allah! Praise be to the Padishah!"

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In spite of the weed I begin to feel better.

"Where are thy brother tribesmen, friend?" Paul continues the conversation indefatigably.

"They rarely show on the road; chiefly when it means settling a feud. Only during harvest do we live together peaceably. Against outside foes, too, our village holds together. I alone stand outside of party feuds. Even the strongest submits willingly to my judgment, and respects my white hairs—how few of their like are there in our hills! Will the sahib deign to visit our people in their huts?" They are presumably all at work, forging weapons, manufacturing guns, casting bullets, making preparations for their robbers' trade, fulfilling their civic duties. "We shall be glad to show our craftsmanship to the sahib."

There they sat in their wretched, fortress-like shelters, in their primitive workshops, these wild, warlike fellows, with their loincloths round their naked bodies. Everything is being fashioned by hand. Machinery is still unknown here. Therefore years pass before the separate parts can be manufactured and the first shot fired from the rifles—at human targets.

"Lee-Metfords," the omniscient Paul explained to me, "exact imitations of the English military rifles."

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And, as a matter of fact, externally the guns were in no way distinguishable from the English originals. Even the number, mark, crown and cypher of the military rifles were counterfeited inimitably. They are certainly considerably heavier, nor would, I take it, their ballistic qualities quite compare with those of the Western products.

"Real Lee-Metfords," the Sheik pointed out with pride.

"They will pay any money here for the forged Government mark," Paul explained.

"We have also cast a cannon," the old man boasted when he noted my visible astonishment at the achievements of his compatriots.

In the meanwhile much folk had assembled in the street; women and children formed a ring round us, which every moment began to draw closer; boys and men, too, soon joined my tour of inspection, excited by the unwonted visit and by the interest I showed in their craftsmanship. They had, I suppose, for the time being forgotten every personal quarrel. All helped with a will to drag the cannon out of a tumble-down shed. To the general delight I sang the praises of their prehistoric Krupp to the accompaniment of manifestations and gestures of the highest admiration. Every one wants to explain it

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to me, to assuage my enthusiastic desire for information, and while some run off to fetch its ammunition, others again produce an unsavoury bedstead.

Familiar with the customs of the country now, I take my seat. Already the Sheik's pipe is going the round anew, and, in order to underline their kindly feeling, yet others too produce their moist, chewed tubes from their hospitable mouths. I feel giddy—in vain do I asseverate that I am a non-smoker. Then rescue in the guise of the shot, and I am now free to take my pleasure in the round stone cannon-balls unmolested. Gratification on every side! What won't one do in a strange house to gratify one's host? You admire even the ugliest of children. And obviously this cannon was the most cherished heirloom this family of scarecrows possessed.

In my fervour I pick up a projectile and hold it with the appreciation of expert understanding against the mouth of the muzzle-loader and go on marvelling to the delight of my new friends. If only in their gratitude they will refrain from handing me their pipes again. But oh, horror! Not in the guise of a wet mouthpiece, it is true, but far more ominously does fate overtake me. The ball slips

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from my hands, and rolls down into the dark tube. Consternation paralyses the crowd. There is no possibility of making the treacherous cannon disgorge its prey. In vain do they tilt the gun; in vain thousands of busy hands hammer and bang it; the shot never moves or budges again. "If they had only first loaded the cannon with gunpowder." But even the chance of shooting it out is now past praying for, too. What is the upshot of this mischance going to be for me? I stammer my deep regret, and fumble about my purse; but the Sheik raises his hand in refusal, and with a dignified salaam he offers me his pipe.

Towards their guest they behaved as well-bred gentlemen, these savage blood-stained men, who otherwise for the smallest advantage are wont to unsheath their murderous knife and then spare neither father nor brother. The laws of hospitality are sacred in their eyes, inviolable as their pledged word and the treaties they had concluded with the British Government. Secure in this certainty, England was able to advance on her expansion in the North-west with, comparatively speaking, slender resources and almost without bloodshed. To its credit British statecraft has here, too, felt its way so as to enlist the idiosyncrasies of its

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subjects to serve its purpose. A sense of justice and political craft appeal to the sense of honour of these turbulent bandits of the north, and enlist them in the service of civilisation. These reckless robber bands are quite astute enough to appreciate the value of the concessions Calcutta makes them by allowing them a free hand away from the highroads and districts taken over by Great Britain. For their part they are, as a general rule, honestly concerned not to transgress the bounds agreed upon and to fulfil the duties they have undertaken as sentinels on the great highroads. Not for mountains of gold would even the most reckless wastrel allow anyone to haggle away the rifle entrusted to him by the Anglo-Indian Government for police duties.

It is to England's incalculable credit to be great in small matters and never to be petty in great ones, to contrive a practical working arrangement in any given conditions, to foster the self-consciousness of her subjects, and to inspire them with zeal for the national cause. Only by these methods could these savage, remote mountain regions, too, have been opened up to civilisation and to trade and intercourse with the Western world, to the advantage of every nation that holds a stake in the markets of the world.

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Under safe guidance we find our way back to the great military road again. I am anxious to reward our guide with a sovereign. But he refuses it with dignity: "One does not take payment from friends." "Well, then, there's my revolver for you. That will suit us both excellently. It's been a nuisance to me for some time." Thanks to English prestige, even here a white skin is our talisman.

I show the mechanism of the little weapon to the boy, who is beaming with joy, and press it to my side for the last time. "Farewell, faithful friend, and don't shed too much blood in the service of your new master." "May thy pipe never go out, noble sahib," murmurs the other in farewell greeting as he leaves us.

Towards evening we at last begin to go downhill. The country, hitherto a chaos of rocks and rubble, now changes into luxuriantly green meadows. Gleaming streaks of silver in the distance fascinate the eye—the artificial irrigation of the Kuram river, on which Kohat, the destination of my ride that day, lies.

Ever and again the roof of people who are utter and entire strangers to me shelters me. To this hour I am hardly sure of their names. Shall we ever meet one another again? General and Mrs des

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Vœux are the names of my kind host and hostess to-day. For the first time for months I am once again sleeping in a real bed. If the equipment of the house leaves nothing to be desired in the way of ease and comfort, this latter-day couch with a spring-mattress impresses me most of all. Only under the Viceroy's roof am I able to recall this luxury in India. Otherwise, the customary plank bed has cradled me into the land of dreams.

The general's wife is an enthusiastic croquet player. She fights the keenest battles on the green sward. But in other respects, too, is Mrs des Vœux a well-known personality in military circles in India. On the occasion of the siege of Chakdarrha she was beleaguered with the garrison until Sir Bindon Blood relieved the fort. My kindly hostess, I hear, behaved like a heroine then. But, although I stayed in her house for forty-eight hours and talked about my visit to Chakdarrha to boot, she never made the slightest allusion to her adventures; the great are always modest. English people never boast. In the des Vœux's household the whole world for the time being revolved round a croquet ball.

Several officers with their wives were invited to dinner. The table is prettily decorated with flowers; the fair sex wears low gowns; the male contingent

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is in claw-hammers and white ties. And yet they are never certain that an attack will not break up the cheery gathering. General and Mrs des Vœux had a similar experience at Chakdarrha. From their merry dinner-table they had to fly helter-skelter into the fort and to lead a life of privation, of alarms, and of terror, for months, in anxious uncertainty whether and when they might count on being relieved.

Conversation turned a good deal on the fanatic frontier tribes and on the savagery of the Asiatic, yet not wholly in terms of disparagement. The Briton respects his foes. "Every single one of these savages is a hero," the general's wife expressed it, "for every day they all defy the arch-enemy of mankind—Death."

After the last course, the ladies rise and make room for the port. But the men do not get heated. Clear and level-headed in the drawing-room as on the field of battle, our cousins are able to discuss even the most burning questions of the day. Very little is said about the Emir; one does not care to talk about the sick man next door from whom one has expectations. That there are Russians living on the other side of the mountains seems to be a fact that is sinking into ever deeper oblivion. Entirely absorbed in the heavy demands their pro-

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fession makes on them, the officers of the North-west Frontier devote their chief interest to service matters. Only leave is eagerly discussed. "How long have you to hold out in India still? When are you going home? What line are you travelling by?" Like a soft chord amid the restless hustle of their hard lives, the longing for home rings out.

The return of the gentlemen to the drawing-room is the signal for music and bridge. But as every one here gets up with the sun, we break up long before midnight. "Sleep soundly, and pleasant dreams—of spring-mattresses."

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CHAPTER XXXVIII

BANNU

I AM shaping my course for Bannu, my next station, escorted by Afridis in British police service. Mrs des Vœux's kind forethought has provisioned me lavishly for the long ride. Some little round pistachio cakes, more especially, have remained one of my most savoury memories.

As far as the eye can reach an ocean of sand and stone. Peculiarly fascinating is the colouring of the landscape that in the burnished morning sun comprises the whole colour scale of blues, from the lightest shades to sapphire and ultra-marine.

At the foot of the mountains, rising in a mighty fabric of peaks and pinnacles up to and into the clouds, winds a ravelled chain of lower jagged ridges, entirely barren of vegetation. In the haze of the distance rise the glaciers of the Hindukush. Deep, soundless silence reigns over rocks and preci-

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pices. No feathered songster lifts his voice. In the interior of this mountain world a few ibexes and jackals are said to eke out a livelihood. What on earth have they got to live upon?

"Is that valley there in front of us still covered with snow?" "Oh no," laughed the Afridis, "that is all salt." In very truth, a sea of salt in the midst of these billows of stone. Calcutta exploits this gold mine, and a single Englishman supervises its working. He superintends the exploitation of the salt deposit, and personally checks the weight of every single camel-load. I come upon him at his scales. A long row of laden camels is drawn up in front of him, and caravan after caravan is waiting to be dispatched. One camel after another, a searching glance at the weights, an entry in the great ledger, and—a sigh of resignation. Sky, salt, and camel, day in, day out.

I am received with acclamation; even the dull-witted oonts seem to enjoy the change, and to chew their Government fodder with heightened relish.

Mr Perkins leads me through his saline realm. It obviously does him good to hear his own voice. But soon I have got to move on. The Englishman is sorry to see me go. "In a year's time I shall be following you; I am going on furlough then."

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Lucky salted manager, that thou art still able to count in years! But how many camels will by then have crossed thy path? I hurry away without looking round, for fear of being turned into a pillar of salt.

In the air above me two eagles are fighting, the solitary representatives of animal life I caught sight of during my ride through the desolation of the Soliman mountain. Otherwise an air of profound solemnity broods over these lonely heights, where Nature still seems to be untouched by human hand, and all life to have become extinct. It must be a boon to be able to fly like that. In the most direct air line would I make flight for home. I can't deny that I am a little homesick.

A band of armed men brings me back to the sober realities of life. With their rifles over their shoulders, and their long swords in their belts, the adventurous figures draw near—the lawless children of the hills. Instinctively my hand flies to the revolver, but the case is empty. What would be the good of it? Only British prestige can avail us here—a tranquillising reflection that of England's greatness.

The bearded figures stalk past us, sombre and dumb. As silent as Nature are men's passions

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here. What faces! Avarice and murder in every feature. "They slay, or they are slain," observes my guide; "mostly they are the slayers." Born in a higher sphere, they would perhaps amaze the world by the splendour of their mighty deeds or by the blackness of their crimes. But, although their lives remain shrouded in darkness, they play an important part, even if it be behind the scenes, in the existence of the Indian dependency as a state.

On our road lie a few wretched huts. Drought and dust have covered them as with a shroud. Just as everything else in these hills is at feud, these wretched sheds, too, glare a challenge at one another behind their walls of stone and thorn, and tilt forward pugnaciously, as if ready to hit out from the shoulder across the road. One or two women appear in the narrow slits of doors. They seem to be less bronzed than the women of India. Like them, they wear their garments draped in picturesque folds, but gay colours are unknown here. Faded and sombre, their garments harmonise with the pervading tone of the landscape. Only a few human beings eke out their lives here, but how many lie buried here!

Between Kohat and Bannu the country is like a vast necropolis. We are riding over graveyards; on every hand are Mohamedan gravemounds — the

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memorials of the bloody feuds that are continuously being fought out between the several tribes, villages, neighbours, even between kinsmen and blood relations. No greenery relieves these resting-places; no flower exhales its fragrance here. But amid this desolation vengeance and retaliation flower perennially. Gaily coloured flags and cloths wave over the fresh-cut sods in honour of the dead man's fame. Only too soon will new graves be agape, for the sons scorn to lag behind their fathers, who took their departure honourably and bravely for the other side of the grave. A cold life and a hot death!

Not far from Bannu the road runs out into a sandy, rock-strewn plateau, yet every trace of vegetation is still to seek. No tree sheds its shade, no spring penetrates the sand. Only sparse bushes of mimosa of the most meagre kind fill the air from time to time with their delightful fragrance. Light cumuli of clouds, of fantastic shape, float like spectral shadows over this lonely scene of darkling deeds. A longing for some other world overwhelms me. My thoughts, like the clouds, speed over the hills—homewards.

Slowly the orb of day disappears behind the horizon and colours the distant masses of rock in a soft pink. The steppe is flooded in violet tints.

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Not until darkness falls does Bannu come in sight. The gates of the fortress are already locked. I tell them to ring the bell and send in my card. The officer commanding, whose guest I am, receives me at once. The cosiness of his bachelor quarters does not allow one to feel the absence of a mistress of the house.

General Aylmer is a V.C. and, like every V.C., a personality. For the Victoria Cross is only awarded for quite exceptional services in the face of the foe. At the siege of Gilgit Aylmer blew in the main gate of the fortress. The mine which he laid in the face of the foe cost the brave officer the loss of one hand.

Thus every single one of these senior Anglo-Indian soldiers has his story, his famous past—and perhaps a hero's future as well.

The range of capacity which Indian service demands enlarges their intellectual horizon; the perils which it brings with it day by day steel mind and body, and foster prudence and self-confidence. England's officers need all their presence of mind and imperturbable self-control when administrative duties keep them chained to their office desk, while the earth is quaking under their feet.

General Aylmer has won distinction, too, as a thoughtful writer with a ready pen, as a skilled

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diplomatist, and as an experienced administrator. He represents a type of the many-sided knowledge and the personal qualities as Anglo-India develops them, to an extent such as hardly any other country would be justified in claiming. It is to her Indian school more especially that England owes her great men; an administrator like Cromer, a legislator like Maine, commanders like Wellington and Gordon, founders of empires like Clive, Warren Hastings, and Cecil Rhodes.

General Cox, Inspector of Artillery, is, like myself, putting up at Aylmer's house. He happens to be on a tour of inspection. I am permitted to attend the parades. Here, as in the whole of the North-west Frontier in general, the Indian army furnishes the main contingent. The sword England wields here is entrusted to the hands of Asiatics. Only Peshawar and Quetta furnish depots for white regiments. Do they think that they are less able to trust to the military qualities of the latter? Or is it that the European troops are too expensive? Both questions might perhaps be answered in the affirmative without doing any injustice to the soldierly qualities of the English army. For, after all, Europeans have to live under wholly unaccustomed conditions here. The troops on the North-west Frontier have to be

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kept on a footing of permanent mobilisation. They have to keep in continuous training. English regiments cannot become acclimatised at once. They are not equal to the physical strain of the Indian summer. During the hot season they cannot be left in the red-hot plains; still less can severe military exercises be expected of them. And in the sanitoria of the hill stations, where they spend the summer, the contour of the country almost entirely debars anything in the way of drill and field exercises. Only the British officers in command of native troops must stick to the colours, even during the hot season, and set the discomforts and the physical strain of climatic extremes at defiance. How many do it without permanent detriment to their health? They deserve all admiration, these English officers, for their devotion to their military duties. And what about the native troops? In physique as well as in morale they furnish the very best of raw material for the making of soldiers. If the Sikhs, the Goorkhas, the Pathans, and the Rajputs do not as yet, from the point of view of their tactical training, quite reach the standard of Continental armies, in other respects their soldierly capabilities justify the most sanguine expectations. Even when faced by Western troops, they might well give a good account of themselves.

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It was a happy thought to link all parts of the Empire into a single unit for the defence of the North-west Frontier.

"There is no denying it," a Russian, to whom I later expressed my admiration, answered. "Up till now success has justified it. The Indian soldier shoulders his rifle, presents arms, and keeps his mouth shut. But people say that he belongs to the feline race that attaches itself to the house, and not to its master."

"Quite possibly. Who is there who does not pursue his own advantage? But even cats have affections and more capacity for attachment than is generally believed. Only you mustn't maltreat them; and you must make allowances for their idiosyncrasies. The Briton understands his men. He looks after them, and he knows how to rouse their enthusiasm. Officer and man live and die together and for one another. There is nothing that knits closer than blood."

"Roman valour, Carthaginian treachery!" chuckled the Russian; "we know our Asiatics."

For myself, I am hardly in a position to form an opinion, but the military spectacle of the last few months has not failed to leave a very deep impression on my mind. I saw troops made up of the sons

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of the most varied races—poles asunder; I saw them serving under the same flag, called upon to support the same cause, the maintenance of law and order, the advancement of civilisation, but, above all, the safeguarding of British rule in India.

"Do you know the number of white troops England has at its disposal in the peninsula? Only 70,000 men. One Briton to keep every 4380 natives in check. Here you can see how a continent is being ruled, administered, and kept under control by a riding-switch. England's prestige, her political statecraft, her instinct for colonisation bring this miracle about."

"Local conditions stand Great Britain in good stead," the Russian went on. 'The Indian nation is torn by religious differences, split up into antagonistic religious parties. Mohamed's followers are at feud with their Brahmin sovereigns, and *vice versa*. Every two Hindoo companies of a battalion just about balance the Moslem half. The standard of the Crescent floats beside the ensigns of Brahma. In either camp is distrust, heretic hunting, mysticism, and sectarian hate—and while the mob wrangles about its heaven, the English and the priests enjoy their paradise in India."

"However much the latter may profit by it,

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for the Briton his pride of place on the Peninsula spells stern renunciation, lasting sacrifice of life and limb, sweat, and tears. Nor does it stop there. Apart from heroic qualities and far-seeing statesmanship, it calls for continuous iron self-discipline, impeccable integrity. How could the tiny fraction of white men dominate this countless mob, how could it keep these heterogeneous elements together under one flag without the exemplar of unbiassed justice and of the most selfless honesty? The English official, practical, accessible, just, and universally popular, knows how to win the confidence of his subjects and to bring the benefits of careful government and the advantages of civilisation home to them. He is no red-tape doctrinaire. His strength as a coloniser is based on his capacity for forming opinions of his own, on his adaptability, on his tolerance. A solidarity of the point of view in political matters, unanimity in all views of life and everyday customs that binds all Englishmen together, most emphatically contributes to the maintenance of their prestige in foreign lands. Like plants nurtured on the same soil, they fertilise the colonial earth to synchronise in germination and flower. The atmosphere of the motherland—liberty and independence—is equally congenial to its tropical seedlings. In

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the great English nurseries, under the fostering care of the careful gardener, they grow up strong to sturdy growths, because their roots draw sap and nourishment from a soil steeped with Britain. There is nothing petty about John Bull; he is not always spying over even his subject neighbour's party wall. He never makes himself cheap. Without vain-glorious boastfulness, without any irritating display of force, he yet remains master everywhere, although he rarely issues orders, and more rarely still prohibitions. Without any personal prepossessions, he does not bother about a man's parentage, whether it was white or black. For this reason his many-hued subjects bear their British monarch's throne on their backs with unanimous national pride and loyal affection."

"And yet there are malcontents—among those classes, too, whose very existence depends on England alone, whose fate is most closely interlinked with that of Great Britain."

"There are elements of that kind everywhere; but the mere shadow of a Briton suffices in itself to exorcise them, to compel them to respect and obey the canons of our Western culture. What a triumph for Occidental civilisation! Bombs and pamphlets, do you say? What is the significance of isolated cases in a country where people count their millions by the

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hundreds? Even in Europe, people are murdered on the public highway, and scoundrels derail railway trains. However virulently the educated, ink-spilling Babóo, who owes his existence to the 'hated' Anglo-Indian administration, may attack and vilify the Government in foreign papers—however much the Indian press may (thanks to English tolerance) protest against foreign rule and claim India for the Indians alone—the services England has rendered to India are not belittled thereby, nor are England's greatness and prestige dimmed. Success tells its own tale. The inhabitants of the Peninsula—from the coolie up to the Maharajah—are well aware that British authority protects them from savagery and tyranny, that but for it insecurity of life and property would return, and stagnation of trade and traffic would ensue."

It is Great Britain's moral force only that has created the India of to-day, and that holds the Empire together. England bids the Indian deserts clothe themselves in verdure, smooths the path for enslaved peoples towards a life of peace, grants the natives their share in the achievements of civilisation, allows them to sit in judgment on equal terms with the whites and to attain to the highest positions of honour, and promotes merit without distinction of colour.

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CHAPTER XXXIX

DERA-ISMAIL-KHAN

What pleasant things can one say of Dera-Ismail-Khan?—A garrison of hospitable officers. But beyond that?—A cockpit of fanatic Mullahs, the abomination of desolation, red-hot in summer, bitterly cold in winter.

The 36th Sikhs are putting me up. By day, military parades and exercises; in the evening, a good and cheery dinner in the officers' mess.

I give expression to my admiration for the regimental band of the 36th. The bandmaster is a Scotsman, and has made his band for himself. His musicians—partly Hindoos, partly Mohamedans—all learn their music parrot-wise and play so zealously that they are all trying to finish first by a few bars.

Gratefully do I recall Lieutenant Maxwell, the adjutant. In spite of the heavy pressure of his

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work, this universally popular marvel of a man had time to spare for every one and everything—even for a German tourist.

At Dera-Ismail one has already reached the plains, but its scenery is bleak and monotonous. The features of the country already indicate the proximity of the Sahara of India. Even the waters of the Indus, which force their way through the masses of sand here, seem powerless to temper its desolation.

I cross the sacred river in a boat, to take the train at Darja-Khan.

"You will probably be travelling all alone," Tommy Maxwell remarked as we parted. "One only comes across natives on this line. After all, what is there to bring strangers to our God-forsaken corner of the globe?"

But this time the genial adjutant was wrong. Who can describe my amazement to find a Japanee is seated in the carriage? He sucks in his breath, smiles, and bows. Where don't you come across them nowadays, those clever, industrious, plucky gentlemen of the Farthest East? I greet him like an old acquaintance, and am glad of his company, for young Japan is always interesting. "Where are you going?" "A little pleasure trip"—with a little

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cough of embarrassment. Is he out to study life in Indian harems?

Mr Kaito becomes increasingly taciturn and absorbed, but the more intently does he survey the country. Our iron steed drags itself wearily through the oppressive monotony of the verdureless district. Not a patch of green relieves the scorched steppe. Even the scanty fringe of grass on the banks of the Indus is dried and yellow. Here and there the usually flat landscape rolls away in undulating country. Further on, scrub, mostly low thorn bushes, covered under thick layers of sand. My Japanese fellow-traveller is writing and sketching. What on earth can he find to engage his interest in this dusty scrub?

After a thirty-six hours' journey we reach Ruhri. From this junction of several railways, the metals, both on the right and on the left bank of the Indus, run down to the sea. A mighty railway bridge connects the two systems. The eyes of the little Japanese gentleman are growing larger every minute —he takes up his stand at the window, runs from one side of the carriage to the other and back again, raises himself on tiptoe, talks to himself, and then makes notes busily. We stop at Ruck for a meal. I take my seat at the table beside Kaito-San. Our

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conversation turns on Japan. He chuckles and, when I mention the dainty geishas, fairly shakes himself with delight.

Beyond Jacobabad the scenery again takes on a mountainous character. Here the gradient of the rocky buttresses which lead up to the tableland of Quetta begin. Through a wild, tumbled ocean of peaks and pinnacles winds the railway, dodging threatening cliffs and giddy precipices by hair's-breadths. How were they able to discover engineers reckless enough to work out these curves, to plan these viaducts, which, suspended to all seeming in the air, tremble under the weight of the train? Even the engine seems stricken by panic; only with bated breath does it venture over the swaying bridge. In order to forestall unpleasant sensations, I gaze at the fantastic masses of rock towering high into the sky, and am careful not to lower my eyes into the dark depths that yawn on either side. My Japanese friend seems to be immune from all trace of vertigo; he frequently leans far out of the window and, half absent-mindedly, goes on painting his hieroglyphs with immutable imperturbability. He thinks it out, twists his head about, and hisses—he has found the solution to his problem.

Ever further do we penetrate into the gloomy

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mountain-world that, gray shading into gray, extends illimitably in front of us. The railway now crosses the celebrated Bolan pass. Soon afterwards we stop at a little station. In the shade of some crippled trees, powdered with sand and dust, stands a little knot of native Baluchis, strange figures, bristling with weapons. By way of antidote our train carries some Indian police troopers. They assume a very martial air and march proudly up and down the platform during our long wait. It would be impossible for the guard of Buckingham Palace itself to parade with greater self-importance.

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CHAPTER XL

QUETTA

The breeze, in spite of the burning sun, is nipping.

At Sibi we break our journey to dispose of the customary midday meal. A broad-shouldered, big, vivacious man takes the seat opposite me. The "Pilsener" beer of Quetta is greatly to his liking. The boys address him as "Colonel" and wait upon him with low salaams. The commander of an American bar, maybe? "As a German," he says, turning to me, "you will know how to appreciate the juice of John Barleycorn," and at the same time he fills my glass in the most friendly way. How on earth did the Colonel guess my nationality? "I note the flight of every bird and track every fox to its earth. There's nothing that remains hidden from me," continued my *vis-à-vis*. "In disguise you would take me for an Afridi, for a native of Madras, or for a Parsee. To-day, however, I have laid my incognito

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THE BOLAN PASS

A railway bridge on the Jacobabad-Quetta line

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aside and am enjoying my beer. I am Inspector Beatty, of the police. For weeks they have been keeping me informed about your movements. I am glad to have run you to earth at last. Now, you'll have to submit to my cross-examination. How are Count and Countess Montgelas getting on, more especially the Countess? Two years ago I made them tap a barrel for me at this place to quench my thirst. When the Montgelas saw the noble liquor foaming they came up and sat at my table. I knew them, for I am Beatty, and when they wanted to pay I introduced myself as their host. What charming people, these Montgelas! Give them my kindest regards, and kiss her ladyship's hand most respectfully for me."

At eight o'clock that evening we reach Quetta. The sky has clouded over. It is snowing—snowing in India.

The house of the general-commanding stands in the midst of pleasant grounds. Tall Persian poplars rise in front of the main wing. General Smith Dorrien is away on leave. His second-in-command, General Pearson, and his charming wife, take me into their kind charge. I am living at headquarters and enjoying genuine English comfort in this desolation at the Back of the Beyond.

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"A Japanese officer was travelling in the same train with me." "Ah! indeed!" nodded the general. "They visit us on the Frontier pretty frequently nowadays, the Japanese do. They are always wanting to find out about something everywhere."

"Would you care to accompany my wife on a drive through the country?" I gratefully accept the kind offer. In the most charming way Mrs Pearson explains the sights of the town to me. Quetta, only a few years ago a wilderness, became overnight the depot of a strong military force. Like all towns of recent date, Quetta rose under the auspices of long, straight-lined streets, intersecting at right angles. They are all planted with tall silver poplars and glorious fruit trees.

We drive past the fort. A sturdy rampart this embodiment of British power. "Over there lies Chaman," observed the general's wife, pointing to the north, "the furthest British outpost on the Frontier between Baluchistan and Afghanistan. On the rising ground in front of us you see the new military academy of India. That is another of Lord Kitchener's many useful bits of work. Do you go in for tennis, cricket, or polo? I think we had better drive to the club now; you will make

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the acquaintance of the whole of Quetta there. And a cup of hot tea will do us good."

There is nothing to beat the clubs of India. Every station, even the smallest, with a European population has one of them. They furnish the centre for social gatherings, for rest and recreation, for games and sports—the hearth and home round which the colony forgathers, irrespective of rank, of sex, or of age.

The clubs of the Peninsula are remarkable for their practical, adequate organisation. Strangers can almost always count on obtaining quarters here, and always on finding passable culinary arrangements for all their meals. The service is attentive; the dining-room, spacious and roomy. In the library, where long windows, always standing open, admit light and air, comfortable easy-chairs invite you to literary pursuits or to meditative contemplation. Side by side with the local papers, the most reputable European and American journals are at your disposal. Reuter's telegrams are, immediately on receipt, pinned up in the hall: "Successful ascent of Count Zeppelin." The whole of Quetta crowds round this news. When shall we be able to set out on our homeward journey by air?

Besides dirigibles, men and affairs of the colony

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are conscientiously discussed. If views on these topics may be divided, there is only one opinion about the locality: "Quetta is the bleakest hole on the face of the globe. Remote from all traffic, it lacks all attractiveness of every sort and kind. In winter, icy gales; in summer, red-hot heat. Only soldiers—no change—nothing but soldiers. Few opportunities for horse exercise; very indifferent shooting." But the present military scheme of India demands this world-remote dislocation and the massing of troops at geographically important points adapted for concentration by the topographical conditions of the country. All honour to Kitchener! He has raised the Indian army to the pitch of its military efficiency of to-day; he has sweated it into a concentrated unit, into a weapon tough and sharp enough to repel any attack. He has laid down roads and railways; he has re-organised the defence of the North-west Frontier on new lines, so that under the control of a central command it is easy to handle. What would be the use of the walls of the ramparts of the Hindukush to-day without Kitchener, the English Moltke?

General Pearson makes the suggestion that I should pay a visit to Fort Chaman. "You won't regret the little excursion." In Europe we used to

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consider twelve hours by rail as getting on for a journey.

From the height of the Kojak pass you enjoy a glorious, almost boundless, view towards Chaman and Afghan country as far as Kandahar. While our course dips downhill I am allowed to ride on the footplate to obtain an unimpeded view. Below, Fort Chaman rises out of a broad valley surrounded by hills. It is the terminus of the railway—and of civilisation; the domain of Central Asia begins here. A battalion of native infantry guards the railway and the arsenal.

We have left winter behind us in Quetta. Here the sky once again opens its blue eyes. Like glittering silver gleam the frosted mountains. The might of spring wrings many tears from them, which plunge down in the guise of great cascades. Nature, the witch, has touched the landscape with her magic wand; she has bidden the sun to shine.

Major Shearman and his aide-de-camp receive me as I alight from my iron horse, and convey an invitation from the battalion to mess with them. I retain my quarters in the railway carriage that brought me here and will take me away early the next morning. By only one single train, according to the time-table, is it possible to escape from this spot of the planet.

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Poor 45th! No oftener than twice in every four-and-twenty hours does the whistle of a locomotive sound in your ears to stir your longings—arrival and departure.

Three heroic women share the hard fate of their husbands, and make the best of a bad military job. They fall back on their dogs and horses or on their mallets and croquet balls, cultivate their own reflections in the burnished sand, and let the glowing sun beat down upon them. Their cheerful courage does not forsake them, in spite of fashion papers out of date and a dearth of the newest modes; for these three are Englishwomen in India. Like the handful of white men in command of coloured troops at this uninspiring outpost, they too are imbued with the sole thought: to hold out in the service of their native land. For otherwise all ambitions that point towards Afghanistan would have to go unfulfilled.

What need is there of this heavy outlay of money, of these many rifles? What is on sale England could acquire, or wipe out whatever is destructible. And yet British policy has called a halt at Chaman; the troops have to avoid every violation of the frontier most scrupulously. The camp lies at only a short distance from Afghan territory, but no British subject would dare to cross the Rubicon—even if

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only by way of sport or fun. The officer commanding the battalion of the Light Baluchistan Infantry in garrison here a few years ago had to pay a penalty disproportionately severe to his offence for his transgression a long way after Cæsar.

Lord Kitchener had announced his intention of paying a visit of inspection. The ambitious major, in his zeal to show himself well informed on matters on the further side of the white boundary posts, on the day before the arrival of the Commander-in-Chief, casually rode across the frontier. Who should presume to bar his path? Then the enemy's frontier guards appeared out of their hiding-places, declared the explorer to be their prisoner, and forced their unwelcome escort on him to their adjoining stronghold. Lord Kitchener reviewed the battalion without its major. A single company of Baluchis would perhaps have sufficed to overpower the Afghan sentinels, a single cannon-shot from the fortress would have been enough to lay the enemy's mud fort out in ruins. But England never fires a gun for the sake of an officer acting beyond his instructions. The cook, trained in a British kitchen, was allowed to unsheath his spit and send over samples of his craft every day.

Cabul is far away. The diplomatic negotiations between Calcutta and the Emir's capital covered

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three months before the prisoner was released in time to embark on the voyage to England for which he had so often sighed—for the last time in his Majesty's uniform.

The battalion was at the moment playing cricket. "Would you care to watch the game and go over the place afterwards? My aide will take you round later on." So we ride out to the ground, where officers and privates—in shirt-sleeves with their short pipes in their mouths—are playing a match. They are bowling as if they meant to pitch the balls as far as Kandahar, and piling up scores which it is not for the uninitiated to disparage. But the native soldiery is as keen as their English instructors are, and ladies never take their eyes off the ball. The captain's wife gives us afternoon tea and invites me to dinner that evening. "My house is very small," Mrs Hemming apologises; "we've only got four rooms, although land and fresh air ought to be cheap enough here."

So in Anglo-Indian garrisons, too, there's "no room to live." Yet English hospitality for all that knows no bounds, and no one knows better than the daughters of Albion how to enliven the blankest of walls or how to transform the most unattractive service quarters into a pleasant home. Displayed

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to picturesque advantage, gay embroideries, photographs, and trophies of the jungle and the ballroom relieve the chilly bleakness of the four-square rooms. Flowers and plants fill dainty vases; comfortable chairs with soporific cushions surround the fireplace. Beside it the kettle is hissing on a tea-table laden with dainties of all kinds. A terrier is luxuriously stretched in front of the blazing hearth. The cosy comfort makes us forget our Asiatic surroundings—in such rooms as these and amid unconstrainedly pleasant folk you enjoy the sense of the cosiness of a home.

Mr Dewell urges our departure. None too willingly do I put my cup down. "At seven-thirty this evening," Mrs Hemming reminds me, and waves her hand in the most friendly fashion. You take your leave without solemnity, without shaking or kissing hands, without formal phrases. And what's the use of words and of the meaningless contortions of obeisance? Soon we are in the saddle and, leaving the cricket ground behind us, are galloping over the dusty, sandy desert. Dewell, a subaltern in Jacob's Horse, guides me through his domain with the skill of a Leather Stocking. "I often used to accompany Herr von Martino at Rawal Pindi. We used to admire his smart, light-blue uniform. He

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was always ready for anything—a thoroughly good chap. We were very fond of him. Please remember me to him if you happen to go to Strassburg. Do you see these white stones there? They mark the beginning of Afghan territory. A rifle-shot away lies the fort where the ill-starred major languished." I set the forelegs of my horse astride the boundary line, and can now boast at home to have been in Afghanistan—but not as a prisoner.

Although Nature is devoid of any sort of charm, our expedition affords a good deal worth seeing. Soldierly activity and doings colour the pallid, sandy levels on the British side; you might imagine yourself on a German drill-yard. The keenness of the Anglo-Indian soldiery is amazing. Even the youngest officer cherishes the loftiest hopes in his military ambition. Each one of them aims at becoming a Kitchener. As yet no one takes the possibility of military complications into serious account: the Russian spectre seems to be laid for good and all; risings of any importance from within are not to be looked for; the era of the armed incursions of foreign conquerors is over; the significant successes of England's pacific policy in India has cut away the ground from under the feet of all and every incidental disturber of the peace.

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Thus, first and foremost, the troops on the North-west Frontier only serve as a reservoir for policing the whole of the Peninsula. From a military point of view, the most thoroughly efficient elements are recruited from these northern districts. Climatically, as also from the point of view of the contour of the country, the North-west Frontier is best suited for their training. Here, as throughout the Peninsula as a whole, Great Britain's ensigns only float in the service of peace. Whithersoever they may of late have advanced, they are greeted as the harbingers of a prosperous and happy era. Order and prosperity follow the Union Jack; the pockets of its subjects are filled; Indian merchants amass wealth. The conditions of security engender the spirit of commercial enterprise and the business activity of all nations concerned in the trade of the world.

One and all are free to pluck their share of the colonial fruits that have ripened under a British sun.

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CHAPTER XLI

NUSHKI—KURACHEE

NUSHKI! KURACHEE! The latter impresses you for a youngster who is well aware of his own value and of what he will be worth. Bombay is still the metropolis of trade on the West coast. The question is whether she will succeed in maintaining her supremacy in the future.

With the advancing opening up of Northern India the importance of Kurachee is growing. In ever keener competition will the great trade with Europe, and with African and Persian ports, develop there. New railway connections with the north and east of the Peninsula are in course of construction. With their completion the daily expanding granaries of the Punjab will find their way into the markets of the world *via* Kurachee. In the same way the considerable passenger traffic of Northern India may imme-

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diately adopt this shorter and more convenient route to Europe.

And what of Nushki? Lying on the skirts of the great Persian and Baluchistan desert, it is at present, it is true, a small, insignificant place, garrisoned by one company of native infantry, and the terminus of a railway line with precious little traffic. Yet, at the same time, this terminus of to-day furnishes the future starting-point of the great direct railway route to Europe. "From India, *via* Nushki,—Persia,—Bagdad,—Constantinople, to Berlin," you will be able to read in the official time-tables at no very distant date.

In Nushki I fall in with my Japanese fellow-traveller again. I introduce Mr Kaito to the English officer commanding. They shake hands. In the Land of the Rising Sun this kind of greeting is unusual. Nor in England do you get to hand-grips straight away; but the clasp of allies is an exception! "How much longer?" commented the manager of my hotel, a landless Portuguee from Goa, who at one time had probably seen better days, "Trojan warriors!"

"Not a word against the Japanese. This enterprising modern nation compels our admiration. I respect the self-made man in them."

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"Trojan warriors," repeated the Portuguee, unperturbed. "They are hiding the dagger under their kimonos. They will first of all spring from iron horses in China as trade rivals to England. And it won't be long before they are bombarding India with their cheap rubbish. For instance, look at these matches here—made in Japan." "You're too pessimistic, Mr Kareira. One box of matches doesn't set the whole Peninsula ablaze all at once."

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CHAPTER XLII

JODHPORE

A SWEET little lily of April moods, but clever and amusing—that described the pretty, fair-haired, little girl who with "Poppa" got into the night express at Kotsi. But I wanted to go to sleep, and it is only with mingled emotions that I take closer stock of her. Thank Heaven, I hadn't turned in yet, for the experience that befel an English officer a short time ago is still distinct and vivid in my mind's eye. On leaving Calcutta, he at once, and with a full sense of security, made himself comfortable in the most unbuttoned style. Who shall describe the horror of the gallant disciple of Mars when, on the following morning, he sees two smart young ladies seated opposite him? In the comforting expectation of being alone again very soon, he pretends to be asleep. Treacherous hope! Until twelve o'clock midday the unhappy man had to

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stay in bed under many coverings — in spite of tropical heat.

I am more favoured by fortune. Spring and winter leave the train at Hyderabad—many thanks, Messrs Thomas Cook & Son.

Towards morning we reach Jodhpore. A state coach and one of the Maharajah's cicerones is waiting to fetch me.

I am quartered in the residence for European guests, once the happy hunting-ground of energetic English sportsmen whom Sir Pertab Singh, an uncle of the reigning prince, entertained here during the latter's minority. The chivalrous Rajput prince was a well-known personality on the polo grounds and race-courses of India, and of England as well. He fostered sport in Jodhpore to full bloom. Here you rode the finest horses, stuck the biggest boars, lived in the full enjoyment of a horseman's delights, and on your departure were presented with a pair of the far-famed Jodhpore riding-breeches whose cut finally conquered the whole of India.

The reigning Maharajah, too, owns plenty of these breeches, and at the same time has the irresponsible blood of his uncle in his veins. His chief interest is centred in sport. He keeps the swiftest polo ponies and racehorses, and would even outbid

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Sir Pertab Singh in his extravagance, had not Calcutta taken charge of the key of the exhausted treasury of his state.

"His Highness will be glad to see you this afternoon for a game of polo," the impresario informs me. "Would you care before that to shoot gazelles, hunt jackal, or do some pig-sticking?" I therefore shot, hunted, and stuck pigs, rode and drove about, and at five o'clock turned up on the polo ground in the state coach with running footmen. The Resident, too, was of the company, with his wife and little daughter. His young wife is as beautiful as a picture—and just about as conversational. In the Resident's train an army of English officials of every rank: the judge, the doctor, engineers, architects, and missionaries, with their families and their assistants. They are the people who govern the little country, and at the same time they are exploiting its primitive resources and, for the profit of the commonweal, wresting some products even from this sterile desert. The common people, who used to be drained dry, breathe again, work, and earn their just due under conditions of law and order. Men without any rights become owners of property, thanks to England's constructive power. But in the case of the hitherto autocratic ruler, the new era is

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less welcome. That a part of his revenues is allotted to institutions of public usefulness—irrigation works, schools, and the like—instead of being available for his private purposes, fails to imbue him with any sympathy for modern reforms.

Behar Singh welcomes me with one or two amiable commonplaces, but the expression of his face remains cold and repellant, without the trace of a smile. His dark eyes are making their furtive, persistent scrutiny, flash and sparkle like diamonds when the Resident approaches him. Yet all the time he is wagging his riding-whip timidly and ingratiatingly. His garb consists of Jodhpore breeches, of a light coat, and a pink turban. Our conversation is confined to commonplaces, and we welcome the signal to start play with relief. One ought only to see the Rajah in the saddle.

That evening I am dining at his Highness's. He receives me at the threshold of his palace in a white garment reaching to the floor. Precious stones adorn his pink head-dress. His sovereign feet are uncovered. This barefooted reception flatters me—but erroneously; it is not meant for me, but for the Resident, who arrived shortly afterwards. Without his wife, alas! The three of us dine together. Great Britain is reserved and taciturn.

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The prince follows his example. Speech dies on my tongue too. The food and the wines are of the best, but the Rajah only plays with his knife and fork.

Was it that Western cooking was not to his taste? Milk and vegetable stuffs only, as a general rule, provide the chief articles of an orthodox Indian's dietary. Meat, eggs, and alcoholic liquors are denied him. Or was he missing the women, who in the Indian home loyally wait on their lord and master? Between every course they sprinkle the hands of the diners with water, pour out the customary mead, and at the end of the meal hand round the finger-bowl and the betel leaf. On this the faithful, submissive creatures heap full-flavoured spices, and, with their slender, shapely fingers, twist it up into little balls, which the men chew by the hour. This irritant, that stains the teeth a repulsive red, takes the place of our European coffee. In the betel leaf and in the areca nut the Indians possess an unfailing specific against boredom and fatigue. Europeans abstain from this practice, which leaves unsightly traces, not easily removable, on lips and teeth.

On the back of one of the prince's hunting elephants I ascend on the morrow the steep cliffs from whose heights the citadel dominates the

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country. Once a fortified link in that chain of Rajput strongholds which used to stay the foreign lust of conquest, the venerable castle to-day pacifically flings its gates open to every tourist. Its medieval architecture presents exteriorally the spectacle of tower-crowned bastions and mighty gateways. The ring of stubborn walls encloses palaces and temples, whose time-fretted courts attest the magnificence of their builders and also the golden age and the decay of Indo-Arabian architecture. In the former audience-chamber they show you a notable collection of innumerable and costly clocks which Nehal Singh's predecessor—a very keen collector in this line—had had bought for him in Europe and in America. Now these works of art are placed under glass cases and under English supervision, which has put a stop to expensive hobbies, and has confined the present ruler to collecting of riding-breeches. I can already see these useful garments adorning the Pantheon of Jodhpore, objects of the admiring gaze of sight-seeing globe-trotters. In order to escape from this vision of the future, I am impelled to go out on to the lofty balcony. Over massive walls, over a maze of pinnacles and abutments, over balustrades and eaves, your glance sweeps down from storey to storey.

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At a giddy depth I make out my elephant and my servants—all of them, including the monster, turned to dwarfs. At the foot of the cliff the town is massed.

Beyond, as far as the eye can see, the desert extends illimitably—an endless nothingness—glaring sand and haze.

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CHAPTER XLIII

BIKANIR

THE desert—the great Sahara of India—enmeshes us with its mysterious horror. Naked and bare, dumb and lifeless, shimmering in the sunlight—a dazzling infinity. Stray dunes and low, scattered ridges of sandstone furrow the ochre-coloured plain. Swept perpetually by the winds, fretted away into fantastic formations by the might of the elements, the rocky peaks remind one of the crests of waves on a storm-tossed sea. And yet, despite scanty colours and niggard resources, Mother Nature has succeeded in limning a landscape of striking effectiveness here. Endless distances, illimitable vistas—an impressionist picture of oppressive melancholy. Human art could never reproduce its overpowering impressiveness.

A few paces away from the caravan road kneels a dromedary—a picture of forlornness and of the despair of resignation. It had broken its leg, and

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[Photo by Herzog & Higgins, Mhow

H.H. SIR GANGA SINGH, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I.

Maharajah of Bikanir, in his uniform as Honorary A.D.C. to the Prince of Wales

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the Hindoos, who loath the shedding of blood, had abandoned it to its fate. Vultures and crows will soon turn up to devour the unfortunate beast before the breath is out of its body.

Out of the shoreless seas of immense wastes of sand rises—like a rock above flood-tide—the town of Bikanir.

To escape the incursions of the Moguls, the Rajput prince, Bika Singh, laid the foundations of his kingdom in the heart of this abomination of desolation.

The struggle for existence, growing keener here than in districts more high-favoured by Nature, trained a tough, resistant race that proved itself equal to all the tests imposed upon it. Everything that meant to exist here had to get to work, had to be diligent in its business, to be endowed with firm strength of will. Wind and sun exercised an invigorating influence on their physical development, and in the struggle for their daily bread the will-power became stiffened. The unfavourable nature of the soil, which ruled any cultivation almost entirely out of court, threw the populace back to seek their means of earning a livelihood by trading. Camels made traffic possible until the railroad furnished more rapid means of communication

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with the outside world. To-day Bikanir is one of the most prosperous towns of India. Thanks to the inexhaustible energy and the circumspection of its present ruler, trade and commerce are blossoming to a state of prosperity that is always on the up-grade.

Electric light in the desert — can progress go further? The big club, the public buildings, the old palace, and the residence of the Maharajah, in conformity with latter-day Western requirements, are ablaze with its illumination.

Like Udaipore, Hyderabad, and Gwalior, Bikanir, too, is one of these places which the Viceroy and foreign royalties travelling through India never pass by. If in the case of Hyderabad and Gwalior it is the tigers, and of Udaipore the picturesque charm of the landscape, that attracts the distinguished visitors, in Bikanir the interesting, agreeable personality and strong character of its young ruler exercise a marked power of attraction. Sir Ganga Singh is accounted one of the most devoted partisans of Europe among the princes of India, and speaks the English language with the same fluency as his own. In his views and sentiments, habits, in his dress and manner of life, he is altogether an Englishman. Clever, well-read, eager to throw his country open

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to Western civilisation, a gentleman, and a sportsman, this accomplished prince enjoys the high esteem of Government, and has won universal popularity in the European circles of India.

The heir to the English throne had paid a visit here a few weeks before my arrival. Bikanir was still living under the auspices of its distinguished visitor, and I went to sleep without any rocking under the blue silk canopy of the royal guest.

For the sake of its unique grouse shootings, Bikanir has a very wide-spread reputation in the sporting world. In honour of Major and Mrs Welman, some friends of his Highness, a shoot of this kind was arranged on the occasion of my visit.

The preserves are about twenty miles away from the capital, several big decoys surrounded by covers of thick scrub and connected by artificial canals. Thither the sand-grouse flock from all parts of the desert to get water.

Not far from the ponds in the shade of old trees, a regular town of tents is pitched for the accommodation of the shooting party. In the midst of straining tent-pegs I find princely quarters and enjoy royal luxury in the heart of the desert. "But where are the birds?" "They'll turn up at nine o'clock to-morrow morning sharp," replied

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the Maharajah, with a laugh. "Then you'll be able to blaze away as much as you please."

A joke, I take it? Lifeless and deserted lay the pools—not a grouse in sight. "We must be at our butts at quarter to nine at latest," remarked Sir Ganga Singh as we parted after a game of billiards under canvas.

At the hour appointed the guns were sitting all along the banks of the pools in low butts screened by scrub. At nine o'clock to the minute the birds turn up and, from the outset in fact, in such numbers that they seemed to overcloud the sun. Swift as arrows, they sail up from all points of the compass in order to dip after their habit into the water. But then the cannonade begins all round. Driven off by the shots, the thirsty grouse fly from one pond to the other and back again. Swift as the wind, they swoop round butts, high one moment, low the next; in single spies, and by battalions. They come over the guns from all quarters, whirr through the hot air, disappear over the skyline, always to make room for fresh coveys. Soon these, too, are fighting over our heads for the few drops of water they have had to do without for four-and-twenty hours in the red-hot fierceness of the sun in the desert. Incessantly

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the same spectacle in the air above our heads recurs.

Every gun had two loaders. You were shooting uninterruptedly. Towards twelve o'clock the flight slowed down; the grouse now only appear at intervals, and at length only wheel singly round the pools, mostly out of range. The bag amounts to six hundred brace. My share of it was fifty-eight and a half brace—and an abraded cheek.

In size, build, and on their flight the sand-grouse with their golden sheen are like our pigeons. By day they burrow into the burning sands of the desert, by night they seek their food there too. What on earth can they find on these famine-stricken steppes? And yet they are as plump as they are toothsome. Two hours after sunrise they hurry away to drink. It is only in Bikanir that you meet with them in such numbers. "We could make an even bigger bag to-morrow," said the prince, "for the poor beasts will flock all the more greedily to the water then. But I never shoot two days in succession, and on the whole only four or five times in the course of a year, otherwise this rare sport would be brought to an end."

I spent another two eventful days in Bikanir with Major and Mrs Welman. Sir Ganga Singh

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conducted us with the knowledge of an expert and with justifiable satisfaction through his factories, all of them worked by steam or electricity. Chimney-stacks sprout out of the ground here like asparagus, and in their train modern enterprises of every kind. The prison and the hospital are really well worth seeing. In both, ample provision for light and ventilation and for all sanitary and medicinal requirements has been made. In the prison organisation every kind of workshop promotes profitable industry, and its profits are for the benefit of its inmates and of the state alike. The whole of India could perhaps hardly show a similarly progressive institution. The convicts strike one as being well looked after and contented, and pursue their occupations keenly. They showed us splendid carpets made to the order of His Royal Highness the Grand Duke of Hessen and of Freiherr Heyl of Herrnsheim.

We take tea in the old palace—on the silken cushions of the harem, behind the carved ivory lattices. The atmosphere of modernity, with its hotly pulsing life and its smoking chimney-stacks, has been left behind on the other side of these massive walls and ramparts; here, in these legend-haunted chambers, the dreamy peacefulness of their Oriental past reigns supreme. The pious care of the prince

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has preserved the homestead of his ancestors from the decay that has doomed the majority of India's historic buildings to ruin. In the well-preserved splendour of their colours the mosaics, decorating the marble-panelled walls with an unexhaustible wealth of delightful designs, show up well in the glow of the electric light. From these ornamentations the carpets we have just seen have borrowed their gorgeous patterns. A fine and comprehensive collection of old Indian and Arabian manuscripts bears witness to the literary tastes of former rulers and enlists the special interest of their descendant.

If costly ornateness is the note of the interior of the castle, that of its exterior is one of stubborn defensiveness. The mass of its impregnable masonry has a yellowish tone—yellow, like the tint of every building in Bikanir, whether old or new. A quaint picture, a study in tones of yellow ochre—this cosmopolitan city in its setting of desert painted in kindred shades.

His Highness accompanies us everywhere in person. He takes tea with us and regales himself with Western relish on "Leibnitz cakes" from Hanover. In contrast to the custom of other Indians of aristocratic rank, the Maharajah also takes all his other meals with his guests. Only his family keeps

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its distance. Even at the court of this, in best sense of word, modern ruler, Europe has to stand still at the threshold of the zenana. You poor little women of India! Greeted at your birth with displeasure, for the term of your lives the servants of the household, helpless shuttlecocks of man's moods, you waste your lives away behind the bleakness of your closed walls and behind your dropped veils. I wonder if ever the dawn of liberty will break on you?

The fatal custom of marrying the girls even before the completion of their eleventh year, and of allowing them no voice in the choice of the future husbands, assigns a passive, submissive rôle to the Indian woman towards her husband, her mother-in-law, and her new kinsfolk from the very outset. The Indian woman, it is true, escapes the empty fate of spinsters—for every one of them has her suitor—because the Hindoo is free to marry several wives. On the other hand, she is denied all right of making her own choice or of following the promptings of her own heart. Only in isolated and favourable instances is it possible for her to rise to wielding any moral influence on her surroundings. Neither honoured as a mistress nor oppressed as a slave, the Indian woman of the aristocracy spends her life,

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without any point of contact with outside world, in the quiet of complete seclusion—a flower-like, tender, dependent creature. To win the favour of her lord and master and to kindle his desire is the one aim and object of her life. Day and night she is contriving some new adornment, some new device to make herself attractive, in order to charm her spouse. At her toilet numbers of waiting women assist her to dye her eyebrows, to rouge her cheeks, to oil her hair, to polish her almond-shaped nails, to bathe her delicate limbs, and to drench herself with cosmetics and perfumes. How else, indeed, could the long, unending hours be wiled away?

And the woman of the people? She is and remains the harassed slave, the tool of her master, without a will of her own.

Hitherto Western civilisation has only been able to alleviate the hard lot of Indian womanhood with very scanty measure of success. At present, it is true, English women-doctors and nurses are allowed to penetrate within the confines of the harem, that has for so long been barred to every sort and kind of hygienic measure, in order to relieve at any rate the physical sufferings of its sequestered inmates. But centuries may pass away before the advance of civilisation will succeed in breaking down

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the stubborn gates of the zenana, before it will be possible for the Indian woman, like her sisters of the West, to take her place as of equal right with man, as a helpmate at her husband's side. Will she feel any happier, I wonder, when the windowless walls are allowed to open their eyes?

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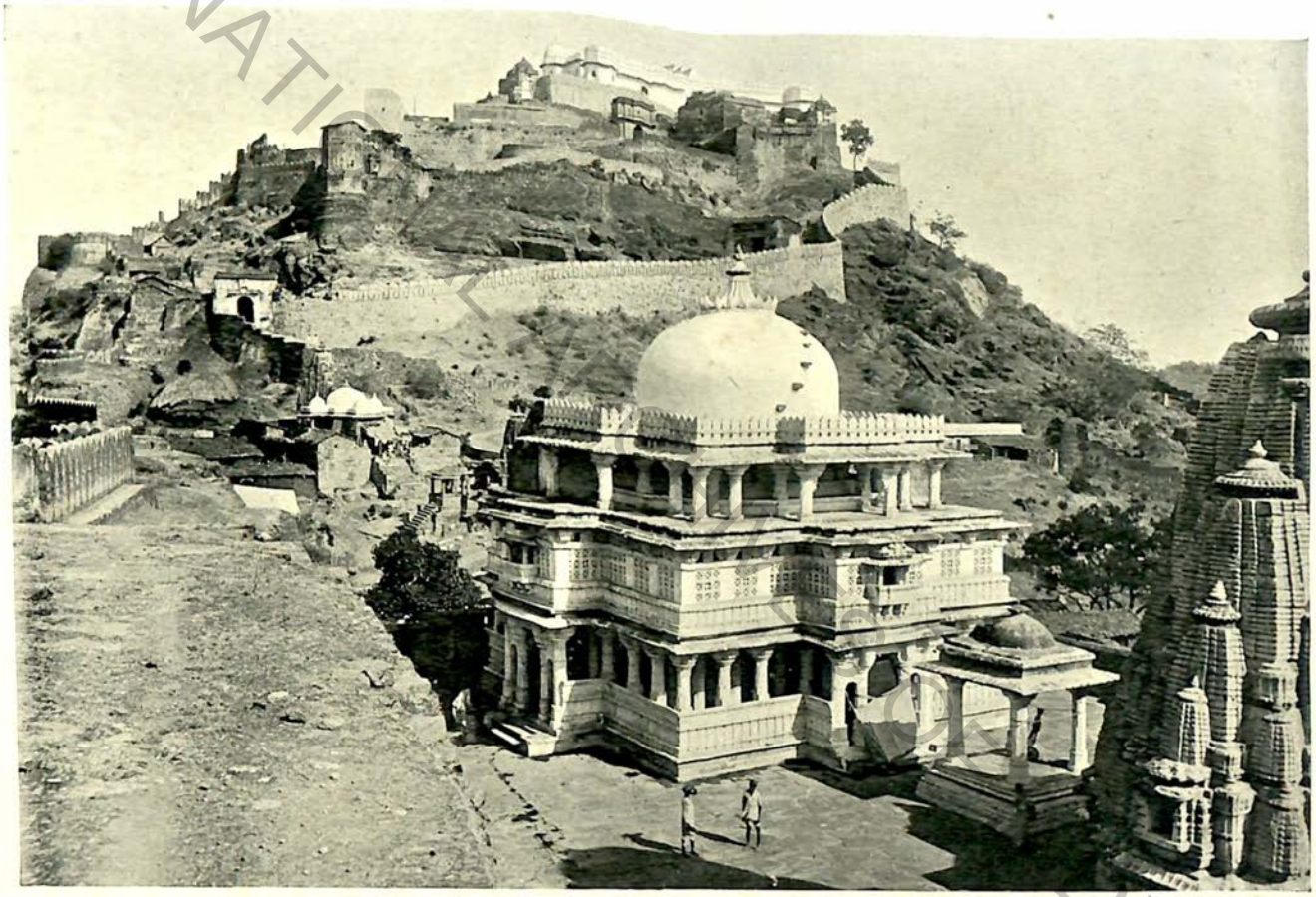

KUMALGARH

A hunting palace of the Maharana of Udaipore. In the foreground, the temple the Author occupied during his visit

CHAPTER XLIV

UDAIPORE

An inhospitable, rocky tableland and, chiselled out of the bare, black stone mass of the Arvali Hills, a bowl with a jagged rim enclosing a chain of blinking lakes in the midst of luxuriant vegetation. Beautiful, romantic Udaipore! Still uncontaminated by the great stream of tourist traffic, shut off from the world, a magic garden behind walls of fantastically fretted rocks and dark, uninhabited mountains.

But where is the town? We have already entered it, but, at the first glance, the forest-like timber and wooded slopes mask its streets. Shaded by dense foliage, half hidden amid the branches, you suspect the houses rather than that you see them. Shrubs fill the gaping fissures of the surface everywhere, streams trickle through the gullies. All around the verdant landscape with its silver pools of water. Mirrored in the lakes, islands—on every

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island a grove, a garden, kiosks, and temples. Is this India? It is surely a scene from Japan or of Italy's city of lagoons with her bridges and footways and her palaces afloat on blue waters.

In the midst of this picturesque, unique setting the broad surface of the Jagmandir sparkles under the play of the sunbeams. On one of its lovely islands Shah Jehan found sanctuary when, hunted down by his father Jehángir, he had to seek safety in exile. Mewar's king proffered his hospitality to the fugitive, and built him that glorious palace whose sunny splendour fascinated our gaze from afar. White, sun-steeped silence—only the lapping ripples whisper the story of this magic work, and bedew the flight of steps leading down to the lake with their silvery tears. Marble balustrades welcome you hospitably as you land in their embrace, and colonnades lead you across shimmering terraces into the alabaster courts of the interior. Dark cypresses and rustling palms caress the white, lustrous marble of the palace, with its glistening cupolas, portals, and balconies—a glittering gem encased in green velvet. In the distance rise the mighty peaks of the Arvali Hills, keeping watch and ward over this wondrous building. The lustrous outlines stand out in sharp silhouette against the sombre background.

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UDAIPORE

Ever since Shah Jehan found refuge here during his term of exile, the hospitality of the royal house of the Sesodias has been proverbial. For centuries now the Mogul emperor has been laid to rest in the peace of the Taj-Mahal, long ago his dynasty became extinct; but the hospitable traditions of the rulers of Mewar have outlived the course of ages, and are handed down from generation to generation.

Gardens and parks deftly planned vie with Nature's virgin beauty in adorning the residence of their lord and master. Flowering shrubs enclose stony water-courses. Low-lying valleys cloak themselves in evergreen, red embroidered draperies. Cacti of wondrous growth crown the rigid masses of rock. Rolling lemon groves slip down the steep slopes. Broad-leaved climbing plants and the mauve trusses of wistaria festoon solitary giants of the forest. Wild flowers shooting up luxuriantly blend the glowing hues of their blossoms into a riotous wealth of colour. And out of this gay tropical vegetation broad expanses of lawn sweep up to the king's palace to spread their green carpets right up to the steps of the throne. Against this sapphire setting gleams the rosy splendour of oleanders, the yellow gold of azaleas, the milky white of gardenias,

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and the flaming red of rare exotics. With proudly lifted crest, the majestic palm tree strains away above their heads, descends to the edge of the glittering lagoon, and, bowing and bending over the mirror of the waters, gazes complacently at its slender limbs. The sunbeams fling their sheen over Nature's wedding garb; fountains exhale their refreshing coolness; every flower is fragrant. The breeze passes like a breath of poetry over the face of the shimmering landscape.

High above the shores of the crystal Jagmandir the sovereign's residence stands enthroned, a stronghold of granite and marble—a whole town of snowy palaces. Light and lustrous, the symbol of self-conscious power, the castle, with its tremendous ramparts and bastions, its gates and parapets, overlooks the laughing valley. Stately towers proudly flank the white walls; gilded cupolas spring up to meet the blue skies. Terraces, covering an immense area, climb up to the outer court enclosed in its colonnades, whence broad marble stairways run down from dizzy heights to the lake below. Palaces of the great dignitaries adjoin the royal residence, alternating with temples, whose bells in low-voiced semitones from time to time call the Faithful to prayer and sacrifice.

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Hospitably the Maharajah, that *grand seigneur* of Old India, by birth and rank the most aristocratic of the Rajput princes, had thrown his gates open to me. Faithful to the traditions of his noble race, Fateh Singh is courtesy itself; but his courtesy does not seem strained—it impresses you as genuine and sincere.

The bluest blood of India flows in this prince's veins, for his dynasty can demonstrably boast a descent of two thousand years. Still further back legend derives the origin of his ancestors from the Sun-god himself. Steadfast adherents to the Hindoo creed, the Sesodias have rejected all and every offer of marriage from Moslem emperors and have preserved the purity of their genealogy untarnished. Reverently do all orthodox Hindoos look up to the prince of Mewar, and the kings of Rajputana yield him precedence.

Although a consistent champion of the old régime, opposed to all innovations, impervious to foreign influence, averse from Western habits and customs, unversed in the English language, conservative in his tastes, in his manner of life, and in the ordering of his court — Oriental, in fact, in every respect—Sir Fateh Singh, for all that, enjoys, by virtue of his loyalty of disposition and of the

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chivalrousness of his character, the absolute confidence of the English Government. Calcutta values his loyalty as a vassal and his weighty influence on the princes and peoples of Rajputana at its proper worth. And yet its suasion is moral only; for Udaipore keeps aloof from every kind of political intrigue. Surrounded by the dignified ensigns of olden times, the Rana lives a secluded life within the borders of his narrower native land, behind the high ramparts that cut off his residence from the rest of India. Here he keeps his court like his forebears—in magnificent and royal state.

Welcomed with the hospitality traditional in Mewar, I was free to shoot boars, gazelles, hyenas, and smaller deer in the environs of Udaipore. But the prince's kindness goes a step further; he arranged an expedition for me to the black Arvali Hills, where the savage coveted panther still ranges.

What an apparatus has to be set afoot for this purpose! You travel into the Asiatic wilderness in European comfort. Elephants and camels convey a regular canvas town equipped with all things that ordinarily only the hotbeds of Western civilisation are in a position to furnish. A staff of natives of rank, accompanied by innumerable servants, sets out on foot, on horseback, on camels, or on elephants.

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Photo by Cowell, Simla

स.रा.फ.त.सिंह

H.H. SIR FATEH SINGH, G.C.S.I., BAHADUR

Maharana of Udaipore

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Close on three hundred beaters with almost as many dogs made up the camp-following.

I follow four-and-twenty hours later with Devi Singh, the chief master of the hunt, and a nephew of the Maharana. Like the rest of the dignitaries here, the Thakur prince only speaks Hindoostani.

My servant is the intermediary of our intercourse. Paul Varadarajee is in every respect a splendid fellow. He sleeps outside my door like a faithful dog, he looks after me untiringly, and is full of touching attentions. Guide, counsellor and interpreter in one, familiar with India's land and people in every quarter of the compass, with a perfect command of English, and not only orally—he is acquainted from first-hand knowledge with every personage of note on the Peninsula, as well as with many representatives of the British peerage. Every day he talks to me about my little boy, whom he speaks of as "young Buddha Count Sahib"; he never cheats when we come to settle up accounts, and only costs me three pounds fifteen a month. For this he dresses and boards and lodges himself; that is to say, he shivers and sweats by turns on the stone flags outside my door, clad in thin garments, and with only a scanty meal inside him. What Indian notions—which concern themselves exclusively with the distinction

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between masters and slaves, between ease and privation—take as a matter of course, appears from our European point of view to be cruel and brutal. How often I tried (in vain, I am sorry to say) to temper the lot of my faithful henchman, for the time being at any rate!

I used to offer to share my meals, gave him rugs and cushions, but he scorned beefsteak and wine and my warm coverings alike, stuck to his lentils and buffalo milk, and inexorably returned the rugs to my room. "It is not seemly," he argued in answer to my representations, "that I should share things with the Sahib. What good would it do me to become spoiled now only to be all more susceptible to my poverty in the future? But I like taking a little tea, Sahib, when there is any left in the Sahib's teapot." Then I strove to mitigate the asceticism of his manner of life by tips on one occasion or another. To no purpose. Paul would neither buy thicker clothes nor condescend to better fare. With increasing cold only the folds of his turban grew thicker, and at most, like the women in Europe, he would wrap a knitted shawl round his head and shoulders, but lower down he persisted in going about bare and Indian. My small gratuities, on the contrary, would find their

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way to the bazaar; to gambling, women, and debauch the Oriental will sacrifice everything.

Paul is now standing behind me on the dickey of my victoria, in which, behind four handsome Australian thoroughbreds, I am hurrying towards the first trysting-place. He fulfils his office as body-servant and interpreter none the less smartly because he is shoeless. To-day he has selected his best English travelling-suit — an old legacy from the Earl of Onslow. When Paul was minded to brag he used to talk of this English magnate and also of Lady Wyllie, whose wardrobe, however, he was debarred from inheriting. In his hand he carries a swagger stick, the gift of Colonel Fowler, sometime A.D.C. to the Viceroy. His turban is a glow of salmon pink. Whether in heat or cold, the Indian swathes his head. Feet and legs remain the more exposed. They never feel the cold in these extremities, lucky beggars.

As soon as the plain comes to an end we mount our horses, and where road and tracks run out the hunting elephants are waiting for us. The biggest of them, Jumbo by name, kneels down with an expression of sickly resignation in front of me. They place a little ladder against his fat carcass, and I mount this swaying Eiffel Tower of

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flesh and blood. A shout from his mahout — which serves at the same time as a signal to me to cling on, at first in front, then behind, to the iron railing round the saddle—and the pachyderm rises to its dizzy height. You clever, docile, loyal beasts — giants in form and strength, and withal obedient and willing like well-behaved little children.

Slowly, but sure of foot, the brave beasts overcome every sort of country, even the most difficult and most trackless. No undergrowth is too thick or too prickly for them. Up hill, down dale, through thick and thin—for even the water offers no obstacle for them—they move on at an even pace with care and caution. The elephant does not trust its gigantic weight to the ground until it has assured itself of its stability by testing it with a groping foot, or has cleared all obstacles from its path with its trunk. It treats big tree-trunks like toothpicks, and rocks like billiard-balls. At times the elephants take huge strides—upwards, sideways, over stone and rubble, across slopes and declivities. I was tossed about on Jumbo's back as if on board a storm-tossed ship, and clung with hands and feet to the low railing of the saddle. Abysses yawn on either hand. You feel as powerless as the ball in a cup-and-ball game

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played by a giant on a tight-rope. What if he were to stumble, began to slip, or even fell down? But he never falls.

"They say they have tracked down a panther," Paul gathers from the huntsmen's loud colloquy accompanied by excited gesticulations. We push on, on foot. In front the guides—not in green with the blackcock's plume or the chamois beard, as in Germany; here the keepers' uniform is flesh-coloured, with scars and cuts as decorations for their bare shoulders. Only the head of every one of them is swathed in cloths for protection against sun and cold alike. The materials and colours vary in accordance with the wearer's prosperity. Poor people wear white only; sahibs and swells, like Paul, the most violent hues, generally carmine, light-blue, yellow, or salmon pink. But why should the panther worry about that?

Close behind Thakur Devi Singh and me follow one or two shikaris who carry our guns and cartridges. We walk down the cordon of beaters. The men are almost entirely naked, but their skinny limbs are hardly calculated to tempt even the hungriest panther. Every third man is leading a dog on the leash—inoffensive brutes, to all appearances, rather after the build of our sheep-dogs, quite

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as thin and skinny as their masters. I toss some chicken bones to them, and they fight desperately for these delicacies. I wonder whether they are likely to rush as heroically at the panther? All the beaters carry bamboo lances. Stolidly the men squat at their stations, chewing betel—the one alleviation of dreary lives, full of privation and empty of hope—and await the signal to start with stoical indifference of the Indian proletariat whose life is spent in patient endurance. Not before an hour's time do I reach my stand—a low platform of rock. "From this spot his Highness has already shot many fine panthers," remarks Devi Singh, crouching down beside me at once, while Paul and the shikaris go to cover. On both sides, at a distance of about three hundred yards, the elephants supporting the columns of beaters at short intervals close in the tract we have surrounded. The guns perched on the elephants are meant to prevent the game from breaking the lines by firing off blank cartridges.

At a given signal the army of beaters begin to advance amid a vast amount of shouting, howling, halloaing, whistling, and stone-throwing; the more noise they make the safer they feel, for, like all other animals, the panther and tiger take to flight before such unwonted turmoil. Only slowly does the brown

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battle array advance. Often the brown noisy rabble halts and dresses its lines. Every thicket, every gully, is timidly approached, and only then cautiously beaten after they have hurled in volleys of stones and have set whole boulders of rock rolling downhill. These, in turn, set other masses of stone after the fashion of avalanches in motion. Any living thing that may be hiding in the undergrowth or at the bottom, breaks cover sooner or later and has to make its way past me.

The watchful peacock opens the ball. Towering to a great height, the sacred bird flashes through the air swift as an arrow. The Thakur plucks my sleeve: "Hyenas." This cowardly, slinking desecrator of graves is always among the first to show his heels. Birds of prey—vultures of the weight of a half-grown man—are hovering above the preserves, and waiting greedily for their prey. Motionless—only my heart is beating—with my rifle tucked under my arm ready for a shot, I crouch down on the rock. "Will the panther be in this drive, will he come?" Devi Singh nods, without turning his falcon gaze from the clearing in front of us. Gazelles, pigs, and jackals are now breaking through the lines. But what's that? I take a look at it through my field-glasses. "Monkeys?" Although they are sacred

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and inviolable in India, monkeys instinctively take to flight before the approach of man, even if it were Darwin himself.

The drive comes to an end. "We are sure of the panther to-morrow," his Highness's chief huntsman consoles me; "but won't the Sahib take tiffin before we get on our elephants for our return journey?" Well, here's luck," is my chastened reflection as I eat my luncheon. And the sickening forebodings shaped like being hideously realistic. With the swaying motion of my Titanic acrobat, curry and rice began to wage deadly warfare against each other. But, as luck would have it, brown and white were too equally matched—in spite of a desperate struggle, neither could gain the upper hand. The orb of day beats down upon us murderously. Towards evening chilly mists benumb the grilled body. But, thanks to kind Providence in the guise of my old friend and shooting partner, Dr Hatterich, of the Medical Board of Health, I am immune against India's treachery—against external contagion as against internal revolt.

"Take some quinine now and then, and for the rest don't fuss or imagine things," ran the family medical adviser's prescription, which has always proved itself an infallible specific.

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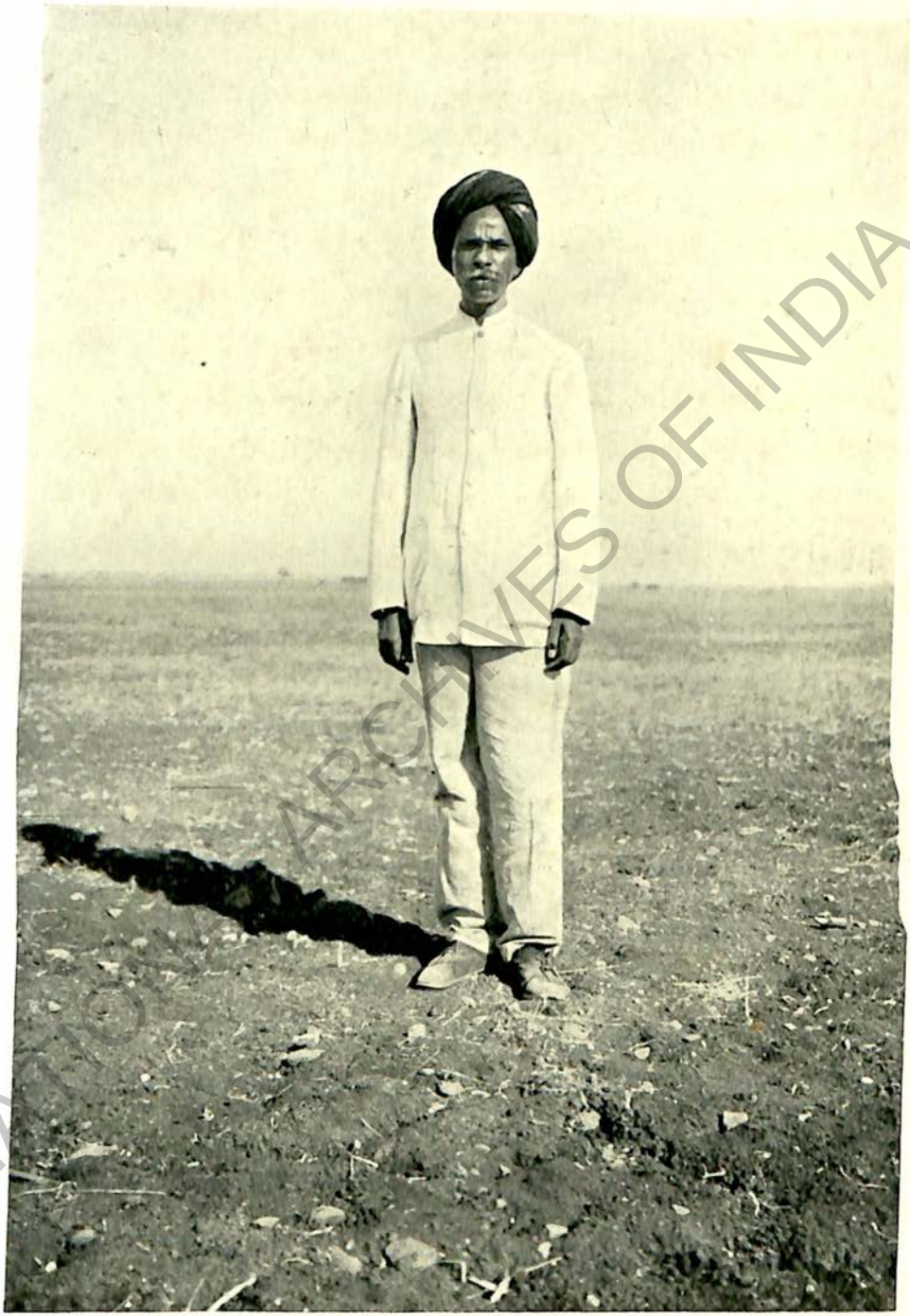

PAUL VARADARAJEE

My faithful servant and the loyal companion of my Indian travels

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CHAPTER XLV

PANTHER SHOOTING

"HAVE they tracked down a panther to-day?" "Yes, Sahib," was the unvarying answer, by way of "Good morning" from the members of the shooting expedition. And what other answer could you expect from Hindoos? Invariably, and with the most ingenuous countenance in the world, do they answer every question in the affirmative. Because they are inured by thousands of years of submissiveness? Or is it from sheer laziness?

"He's coming," whispered Devi Singh, about the hour of noon on the tenth day. "Sight at two hundred, over there behind that big bush—keep cool, Sahib." With equal prospect of success he might have adjured a bride standing at the altar to preserve the composure of everyday life. "Shoot, Sahib." I am on the point of pulling the trigger when the old sportsman lays his hand on my arm to stop me. "A wild cat. It's sacred."

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What the deuce is there that isn't sacred in this country? Brahmins, peacocks, apes, crocodiles, cats —yes, even the fleas, for even into their humble integument the soul of an ancestor may have passed. Everything in India is sacred—except to the Indian himself. With profane ingenuity he contrives to circumvent every commandment. For does not a bath in the Ganges assure the Hindoo of remission from every guilty burden and of the forgiveness of all powerful Brahmindom—provided he pays high enough for it. *O sancta simplicitas*! O patience, noblest of virtues! India is thy motherland. Like a Buddha, if less inured to the crippling, squatting posture, I again assume the rôle of the expectant believer.

Monkeys now came into evidence—greater numbers of them at every moment. From minute to minute their absurd antics become more mad. They pull off twigs, throw them down, scream, and scold, swing from branch to branch, from tree to tree, gallop in breakneck gambols over the rocks, turn somersaults in the air, and pelt one another with stones.

"That's where the panther must be, otherwise the monkeys would not be behaving quite so grotesquely."

In very truth—it is the panther. But hardly do

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I catch sight of him before a little gully conceals him again. "The Sahib must fire as soon as he comes in view again." With a beating heart I keep my gun up to my shoulder. "He must turn up any moment," but in vain does the Thakur fan my fever of expectation; our coveted quarry cheats our expectation. Has he slipped away to one side? "No, he's still hiding in the gully; the monkeys show that." Not in proud consciousness of their strength, majestically, with head upraised, and disdainful of cover—like their royal cousin, the tiger—do panthers retreat before the noisy phalanx. They creep away, crouched along the ground, slink about, and steal off in cat-like fashion.

The beaters are already within earshot. Then—hardly perceptible through the undergrowth—a yellow something, that is constantly stopping to make sure, twists over the edge of the gully, hesitates for a moment, vacillating, diffident. Head and shoulders are all there is to aim at, at two hundred yards. My shot rings out. Taken it too high! I fire again, hear the smack of the bullet, and the panther disappears into the nearest thicket. Huntsmen and beaters surround the little, thickly matted scrub, but do not venture in. They are afraid of the wounded spitfire. Nor do the unleashed dogs take

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the offensive. "Bring up the elephants," now commands the master of the chase. Two of them go in search of him, for a considerable time without success. At last, one of the shikaris espies the panther. "He's crouching over there," his voice rings out, with all the power of his lungs behind it, and in his excitement he fires off two blank cartridges. No good. The fugitive sticks to cover. The elephants obviously won't approach any nearer. "My Jumbo has more pluck," cries the honest mahout who has hitherto been steering me. "Let the Sahib get up and get a shot from his back."

We meet each other half-way, and under the eyes of the panther, so to speak. I climb up my sturdy Jumbo—this time without dignified ceremonial or ladders. According to native fashion, as the man of the people does it, do I seize the tail of my beast and scramble up this Chimborasso of meat. They hand my rifle up after me. Without hesitation, Jumbo approaches the panther, although, as an old hand at the game, he knows that the latter in his wounded state is not a foe to be underrated. If the tiger with a bullet wound will stand at bay in honourable and open fight, the panther—whom you may think you have dispatched—will slink about treacherously for the opportunity of an ambushed attack. A

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past master in the art of jumping and climbing, he attacks his pursuers quite unexpectedly even on an elephant's back. Moreover, the slightest scratch from his claws has blood-poisoning for its sequel; for the panther contents himself for the most part with the carrion of fallen game, while his majestic brother will only feed on freshly killed prey. With two bullets in my cocked rifle and one or two cartridges handy, I am prepared for every attack. The panther's eyes flash and sparkle with rage—bunched up into an ugly ball, about ten paces away from me, he is showing and gnashing his big, sharp fangs.

At a sign from the mahout, the elephant stands still—as firm as a rock. I raise my rifle, put it up to my shoulder, and take aim. But who can describe my astonishment when the panther ingloriously takes to flight? I fire—and with a gurgling growl he collapses at the shot. By way of precaution I let him have the other barrel. A last, hardly audible snarl, a long-drawn, writhing spasm of his mighty muscles, a slight twitching, and the panther is dead. The drivers cheer loudly, and as if from a thousand throats, the echoes send the cheer back. Jumbo now steps up to his quarry, kneels down, and from his lofty perch the mahout pierces the rigid carcass with

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his lance. That is the end of the king of the Arvali Hills. Huntsmen and beaters congratulate me with salaams and genuflexions. "Pukka Panther, Sahib," Devi Singh remarks, and from the epithet I gather that he is well pleased. "Pukka" (top hole) and, in contradistinction to it, "Katsha" (fair to moderate) are always current coin in Indian vernacular.

On my return to the town the prince honours me with a visit. He came to congratulate me on my pukka success and—for want of an Order of the Panther—to bring me his photograph. At the same time I am bidden to attend a garden party.

The company that forgathers to welcome me that afternoon is exclusively native—the greater and lesser dignitaries of the country who form the prince's court. With the exception of the private secretary, not one of those present is acquainted with a foreign tongue. Graciously and formally the Rana receives his guests. He has a gracious word for every one. Kindly benevolence lights up the melancholy expression of his aristocratic, finely chiselled features. Sprays of diamonds decorate the sovereign's plain black coat.

The grandees—handsome, stalwart figures, wearing the long beards they cultivate with some vanity—form a picturesque group round their suzerain. One

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PANTHER SHOOTING

The Author's shooting expedition with Thakur Devi Singh in the Arvali Hills

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or two jewels sparkle on their dark garments. Not all of them wear shoes, but one and all carry swords which they manipulate like walking-sticks and dispose between their legs. The satisfaction at my good fortune in the chase, which furnishes the chief topic of conversation, is universal. Only the private secretary, who acts as interpreter, may have cursed that panther in secret—the panther that furnished the topic of the day in this enchanted, isolated country, remote from the pulsing life of the twentieth century.

For my entertainment—for the suite of the prince is probably well accustomed to the spectacle—duels between animals are arranged.

The invited guests assemble in the shade of the palm trees. Partridges begin the tourney. Tiny and innocuous as the champions may appear, yet they have to fight on terms of life or death, poor little creatures! It isn't their fault that they cannot kick up more dust or dye the ground a deeper red. The Indians show the liveliest interest even in these duels between the smallest of them, follow the several rounds with strained attention, become excited, and make bets. When isn't the Oriental making bets? Fighting cocks now appear in the ring—cock-a-doodles of a gigantic breed with long

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spurs. They fight it out with desperate fury, and the crowd applauds them rapturously. Crows enter the arena. Amid distressful croakings, they meet death of heroes. Then they let falcons fly—they send up pigeons one by one, and despatch the executioner after them, who soon has them in his grip. Their innocent life is soon sped.

Now it is the turn of quadrupeds. Dainty gazelles cross their little horns; antelopes stab at one another with their long, sharp spikes. All shed their warm blood in honour of the visitor.

But the spectacle does not end with this; its crowning splendour is still to come. More blood! The drops spilled so far are not enough to allay the rising excitement. "Soon a tiger and a boar will be pitted against one another," passes breathlessly from mouth to mouth. Poor Master Bristles, what unequal weapons!

From the lofty balcony the Rana with his guests awaits the chief item of the programme. A tiger from the cages is already snorting, penned in by smooth marble walls, fifteen feet below us. He strides up and down with majestic gait and muffled growl. His antagonist has only just been captured. For this purpose a trap, baited every day with choicest delicacies, is kept constantly set near the wild pigs'

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feeding-places. Only the strongest boar maintains possession as the sole proprietor of this inviting table. For weeks he may fare sumptuously without paying the penalty. But if his unlucky star should bring along a globe-trotter whom the Rana wishes to entertain, this restaurant of his suddenly closes its doors with a snap.

Even when unconfined the Indian boar is a sufficiently awkward customer; in captivity he behaves altogether like a mad thing. Boiling with rage, he whets his sharp tusks against the iron bars, tries to break through the cage, grunts, and rages blindly. Then they trundle him into the arena. Without a thought or plan of campaign, he rushes out of the opened cage and dashes, foaming with fury, at the tiger. In the hot encounter both of them roll over. Then the furious antagonists separate, and both retreat step by step to the furthest corners of the arena. Its walls re-echo to the tiger's roar. Soon the boar dashes out again to renewed assault. But even his blind fury has its limits; his strength is almost spent; and only at long intervals towards the end does he renew his onslaughts. The king of the jungle is streaming with blood—his splendid coat is in rags; the unkempt, dirty hooligan, on the other hand, seems unscathed. They now dangle

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tin drums and cloths over Master Bristles to fire him to new deeds of valour. Once again he goes for the tiger. But the master of the chase intervenes. "We shall have to let him off," he tells the prince; "the boar has already mauled him badly." Well, who would have laid odds on that?

Our afternoon tea is over. To my taste the pleasure I derived from this entertainment—this red tea we have drunk—was only "katsha." The sun sets in blood behind the dark Arvali Hills. I take my leave of his Highness—probably, alas! for good and all. Life is hardly long enough for a second visit to Udaipore. Full of gratitude, I press the hand of the courteous, sympathetic prince, the king of rajahs, and leave his hospitable palace with a respectful salaam.

In the midst of my preparations for a start the next morning the Grand Vizier rushes into my room. "A panther killed a zebu last night. Won't the Sahib postpone his departure for a few days?" Lucky people! They manage to live without bridge and Reuter's telegrams. They've got their panther.

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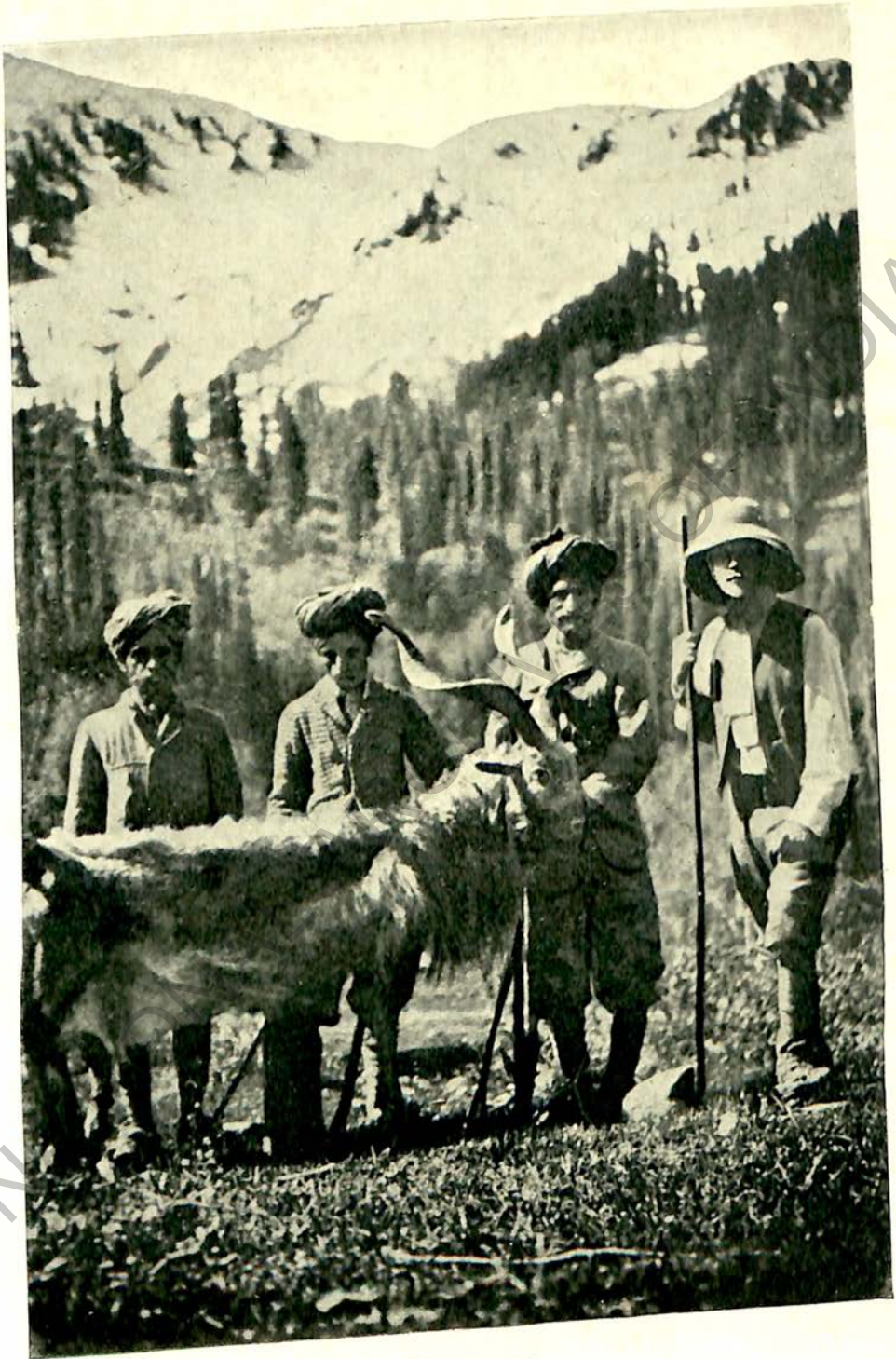

A MARKHOR

The Author's shooting expedition in the mountains of Kashmir

CHAPTER XLVI

BUDDHA

I AM down in the plains again, but I am still the guest of the courteous Maharajah of Udaipore. A magnificently caparisoned elephant is conveying me about Chitor, the former seat of the princes of Mewar. Desolate and deserted is the city that flourished some thousand years ago. Here the voices of the past tell of warlike times when citadel and fortifications hurled defiance at the Mogul emperors—of splendour and wealth that filled the palaces and temples with their lustre. All that these battlements and ramparts enclose of Chitor in the present day is a place of ruins from which its gay moving life has fled. It is only the majesty of death that is left for us to admire to-day.

But it was not only its hoary monuments of vanished splendour that brought me here; the object of my visit was to find an aged Buddhist monk.

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You have to hunt for the pious disciples of the great founder of Buddhism with a magnifying glass in India to-day. Only dispersed and isolated do they still vegetate on their native soil of the Peninsula, where Brahmanism has long ago again overgrown and strangled their creed.

I find the old man at a game of chess, and learn incidentally that we owe the squares, the knights, and the castles to an Indian.

"What did your great prophet mean by 'Nirvana'?"

The old man gazed at me with astonishment in his eyes. "You Europeans try to put everything to the test, deem yourselves skilled enough to explain everything. Just as the beetle is evolved from the dung, so according to your wisdom, mankind, as you believe, has reached its present guise after the most varied metamorphoses. Most luminous and convincing! But there is one riddle your wisdom cannot read: the thought of eternity, of the infinite. Neither in terms of time or space can the learning of even the Western world conceive anything without beginning and without end. Similar is the case of Nirvana. But I will try to give some tangible concept of this light of our weary pilgrimage on earth that outlasts all time as our holy men, in

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accordance with the measure of finite human understanding, have endeavoured to expound Nirvana. It is the sublimest stage of immunity from sin and suffering, the highest spiritual perfection, the quintessence of good conscience that we can attain here on earth. It is hard for us of the human race to conceive the complete renunciation of pleasure, the extinction of desire, the abandonment of everything that is of earth, the release from fear and misery — Nirvana. Not until Nirvana does the proven soul of the earthly pilgrim find rest, does it rid itself of grief and pain, of desires and passions. In the state of Nirvana mankind has overcome all terrors, even those of death; mortal man stands above fate, and when his hour comes he falls peacefully asleep to eternal rest. Whether poor or rich, high or low, every one can attain this most lofty aim. The principles of its ethics are our signposts by the way; we must emulate them as our great prophet has done. Magnanimity, courage to fight down earthly desire, sincerity towards oneself, readiness in self-sacrifice, love, and pity, betoken the wayfaring man who aspires to Nirvana. Not faith, but good works, lead to victory over the miseries of earthly life—but only the good deeds to which love inspires us, not those we do in order to win a blessing of

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grace for ourselves. Love alone can prevail to open our eyes, brings inward knowledge, and exalts us to liberation and to completion. Love and perfection are one, inseparable, as are hatred and self-seeking. Love is ready to succour, full of pity, and eager to let live. Hatred destroys the germ of all that is good; it slays. Whoso follows the commandments of love fosters the life of all that is. Only by virtue of love can we accomplish the highest tasks, only by virtue of love can we enter into the blessedness of Nirvana. Thus teacheth Buddha."

By birth the son of a mighty king, the handsome, chivalrous prince spent his youth in luxury and soft living. Princely wealth enveloped him with the dazzling pomp such as Indian civilisation, which even at that date had reached a high stage of development, was able to afford. None of his desires were left ungratified. He kept his court in glorious palaces enclosed by a veritable garden paradise. Wedded to the fairest women of the kingdom, Prince Gautama enjoyed his life as a boy in vain delights and pleasures. His father's vigilance screened him from the seamy side of life. Furnished with whatsoever his heart desired, he never in his sequestered isolation suspected aught of the sorrow of life, of misery, and of death.

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Poor Gautama, scion of a royal race—thou, too, art but human, born to suffering. A young man's thirst for knowledge lured thee from thy golden cage and drove thee to gauge the world beyond the borders of thy pleasaunces. Straightway poverty and sorrow came out to meet the young man in their most repulsive guise. By a stony, dusty road he fared to an inhospitable, treeless plain. A decrepit old man, clad in rags, a beggar covered with sores, and a naked corpse they were bearing to the grave, crossed his path. With cruel insistence the king's son came to realise that sooner or later he too would have to grow old, become weakly, and decay. His joy in life was past and gone; he turned in disgust from the cup of pleasure which he had just been quaffing to the full.

Obsessed by the nothingness of earthly splendour, the prince turns his back on his glittering home for ever, and takes flight into the desert in order to recover his peace of mind by a life of the most rigid asceticism. But after painful penances which bring him down to the brink of the grave, Gautama realises that his aim—moral self-perfection—is never to be attained by this road. It becomes manifest to him that sacrifices which cripple a man's own body without benefiting his fellows

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can never lead to his soul's peace. In active loving-kindness towards one's fellow-man, not in barren meditation, lies the road to spiritual liberation. Thus illumined, he desisted from further flagellations. He led, it is true, a life of the strictest continence, but he preserved his body for the use of his fellowmen, and taught love, self-renunciation, and mercy. He preached, not to the Brahmins alone; he preached to every estate; he did not debar even the despised caste of the Pariahs. Buddha, moreover, admitted women, who had hitherto been deemed incapable of entertaining a religious philosophy. He opposed the inexorable laws of the caste system, the bloody sacrifices, and dark doctrines of Brahmanism. Buddha proclaimed the equality of all mankind—of man and woman, of rich and poor, of priest and beggar; for every man was called to achieve Nirvana, even if the humble and the wretched had the greater prerogatives.

Teaching, preaching, and comforting, Buddha fared through the land of the Ganges. Groaning under the burden of despotic forms of government, of vexatious priestcraft and the narrowest caste spirit, the masses, rejoicing, welcomed his gospel, that addressed its message of comfort to all, irrespective of caste, and proclaimed the possibility of

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salvation without asceticism. In this way Buddhism spread swiftly over the whole of the north of India. Benares, at one time the stronghold of Brahma, became the holy metropolis of his creed. For centuries pilgrims congregated here, not only from all parts of India, but from the remotest provinces of China, from Mongolia, and the Malay Peninsula. But then Brahmanism again advanced victoriously and expelled the new creed from the whole of Hither India.

Is Buddha's doctrine a religion? Of all doctrinal creeds Buddha's is assuredly the richest in philosophic significance. It acknowledges no revelation; Buddha makes his appearance as a human being, and as such he dies. No gods—the Buddhist has no need of them for his salvation; nor does he enlist the office of a mediator, therefore every man works out his own salvation as also his own condemnation. Hell and Heaven are alike unknown to Buddhist dogma, as indeed is, in the theistic sense, the conception of a future life at all. The earth is all the hell the Buddhist needs. By renunciation mankind is free to attain salvation here on earth. The kingly prophet preached equality, not in heaven but on earth. A strong democratic bias runs through the whole of his teaching.

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At present a fourth part of the whole of humanity professes Buddhism. Yet in its spread it has suffered the loss of a great measure of its inner meaning; it levelled downwards and frequently became debased. While the Buddhist Messiah held idolatry in contempt, gods and dæmons dominate the cult of his followers to-day. Just as the roots of Buddhism were off-shoots of the Brahmin religion, so in its latter-day phases a thriving crop of tares, in the guise of dogmas, ritual, and legends, reacts towards the old creed. The concept of the transmigration of souls vexes the Buddhist just as it does the worshipper of Brahma. But whereas it depends on the Buddhist himself to linger in the Sansara—the restless, torturing life of earth—or to enter on the bliss of Nirvana, the Brahmin must have recourse to priestly mediation, to asceticism, and to sacrifices to achieve his salvation.

With the victory of the cult of Brahma over the gentle teaching of Buddha the spirit of the caste system again gained the upper hand in India. Though accessible to many kinds of reforms and concessions, on this point, that touches their most vital interests, the priests of Brahma were inexorable. Thus the weight of the caste system was maintained down to the present day.

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CHAPTER XLVII

JEYPORE

It was a contemporary of Louis XV. who founded the pink town of Jeypore. What tourist is there who has not paid a visit to this centre of Rajputana, and has not chanted its praise? To a greater extent than any other town of Northern India does Jeypore, this chief station on the great Trunk Road of globe-trotters, reveal purely Oriental, specifically Indian, characteristics.

Only the plan of the town, its conspicuously broad streets, ruled as if by a plumb-line, with their points of rectangular intersection, seems in contradiction to the imaginative genius of India. The level standard of domestic architecture, too, strikes one as exotic in this land of changeful multiplicity. These gaily coloured homesteads seem to have originated from a box of toys; the hands of children, not of architects, to have raised their gaily coloured quoins. If

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there was not enough pink sandstone to go round distemper made the deficiency good. But where would the effectiveness of it be in the gray, prosaic North? But here under the burnished skies of India the colours glow in a sort of footlight effect.

Fairylike, too, is the setting. The street scenes are unrolled in endless variety. One characteristic picture succeeds another in rapid sequence. Here, in the great square in the heart of the town, bargain-hunters and salesmen swarm, a many-coloured throng, round the wares displayed—fruits and vegetables of exotic shapes, victuals, artistic wares from all parts of the Peninsula, curiously modelled vessels of earthen-ware or metal. Over there long trains of heavily laden camels advance. White asses, ox-waggons, and splendidly caparisoned elephants plough their way through this flood-tide of humanity. Restlessly the never-ending ebb and flow tosses and glides past, rain-bow-like in its wealth of colour. On all sides the instinct for garish colour and ornamentation reveals itself. Even the women of the people are adorned with bracelets and anklets. Their silver savings tinkle as thy walk past with a rhythmic note of vibrant pathos. It is only when firmly welded to their bodies that they can safeguard against loss and expenditure the nest-egg for which they have worked so hard.

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A babel of tongues rises above the noisy traffic. Shrieking, yelling—a very Bedlam of sound. Incessant garrulity and the language of mobile gesticulation are the accompaniment of work and leisure. No one is in a hurry. Every one has time for conversation and recreation. In between rises the trumpetting of elephants and the lowing of cattle and camels. Human and animal noises mingle in a deafening din, a cacophony of shrill discords.

Through the inextricable throng a syce deftly picks his way—the forerunner of some sahib of high rank. Shouting and gesticulating, he tries to clear a path for his master. The latter follows with due dignity on a richly caparisoned white horse. With a grand air its rider, armed to the teeth, curbs the prancing steed. In an ornamental palaquin a magnate of the country is borne past. His turban-shaped head-gear, studded with jewels, gleams and sparkles in the bright sunlight. Red-clad runners follow in his train. Respectfully the crowd makes room for the procession. The Maharajah's hunting leopards, led on chains, as well as the prince's elephants with their young, are being taken for a constitutional, and emphasise the ever-changing kaleidoscope of the street scenes as well as the troubles of the passengers on foot. You meet

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Europeans frequently, too. Indeed, since yesterday, mine host of the Kaisar-i-Hind can even boast of Japanese. "They want to get to know about the hardware trade of Jeypore," he chuckles, with a meaning smile.

So that's it. Trojan warriors! You industrious, deeply suspect Japanese! Do you really carry the dagger under your raiment? And does Europe, by any chance, visit you only for the sake of your cherry blossom and the geishas?

Groups of women and children, clad in rags, tenant the flat roofs of the houses. In the open shops handicrafts and trades of every kind are being carried on by manual power, for in the interior of the country machinery is almost unknown. Here you can watch cobblers, tailors, coppersmiths, goldsmiths, weavers, potters, rope-makers, metal workers at their penurious crafts. Women, rubbing the ears of corn between their hands and grinding the grain in creaking hand-mills, are squatting in the doorways. In front of a dyer's workshop bronze-hued men in Adam's garb are spreading long pieces of red, green, and yellow cloth to be dried in the sun. Country folk are squatting about in the filth of the streets to have their beards and heads shaved, or to have their ears excoriated by means of a bent hook,

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a painful operation that often results in the loss of an eardrum. In the midst of the garbage homœopathic ablutions and religious exercises are being carried out. The lower strata of the populace eke out their wretched lives in the thick of an atmosphere of abominations and privation, surrounded by loafers and beggars. In the sweat of their dust-grained, hollow-cheeked faces they earn their scanty bread and chew the comforting betel with primitive whole-heartedness.

Above the din of the streets, in the air, there is plenty going on too. Flights of pigeons and parrots wheel round the roofs. Crows flit up and down croaking. In the upper air great birds of prey are circling and spying about. They swoop down like a flash of lightning to secure some garbage or offal. Human and animal mendicants, lurking about everywhere and following on our heels, greedily try to contest their booty with them. Skeleton-like forms—men, women, and children—shadowy dogs, cats emaciated to transparency, they are one and all animated by the one common overpowering impulse—to assuage their gnawing hunger.

Nature in India is extravagant in her extremes of wealth and of dearth alike. What an interplay of sharp contrasts is there even among its humanity—

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dazzling splendour, Oriental luxuriance, and, side by side, abysses of distress and misery, riotous pleasures and bitter privations, gleaming jewels and naked misery! A fateful "too much" weighs like a curse on this magic land.

Thanks to the kind offices of the English representative, I am able to study the animated street life of Jeypore from the perspective of my carriage. Clumsily, but unmolested, the Maharajah's old-fashioned landau works its way through the noisy, dusty, evil-smelling, rose-coloured town. My indefatigable guide is always trying to point out new sights to me. "Most interesting, typically Indian," he wheedles with importance of a Jack-in-office. But these catchwords no longer draw me. I have had my fill of this "typical," unfaked India where fairy-like spectacles of the tales of a *Thousand and One Nights* are only too often transformation scenes to sober, repulsive reality. My one desire is to get back to Anglo-India. "Home to Government House," I order the coachman. My tents had been pitched there. And where could I have met with a more cordial reception? Mr and Mrs Herbert, with their two charming daughters, preside, full of the heartiest hospitality, over their comfortable home. A four-leaved shamrock—my luck has not played me false.

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Beyond the town, under the shade and foliage of old banyan trees, lies the Residency. On high there floats the Union Jack that points the road to the light, to the free dignity of humanity, for the masses still sick unto death in intellectual darkness and bond-slaves of a moral servitude. What would the Peninsula be to-day without England, and what would England be in foreign lands without the Englishwoman? To her as of right belong India's palm, the gratitude of the motherland, and the recognition of the whole civilised world. Looking the perils of her daily life in the face fearlessly, she does her part in loyal self-sacrifice to keep the king's flag flying in the interests of a mighty work of civilisation, to the service of humanity. I toast the Englishwomen in India — and, first and foremost, Lady Blood!

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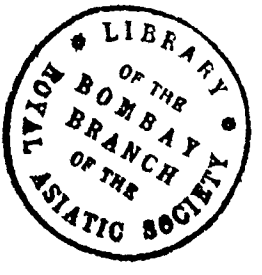

EPILOGUE

CHAPTER I

JAMNAGAR

The sun of India, the colours of India, and the scent of India, together with the hospitality of Anglo-India, have again exercised their magic spell on me. I am beginning to understand what Kipling meant when he put a sentiment that seemed a little beyond the horizon of the rank and file in Tommy Atkin's mouth: "When you've heard the East a-callin' you never heed aught else." While my book has, under the kind sponsorship of Sir Douglas Straight, been committed to the tender mercies of the translator, and is now almost ready for publication for a new circle of readers, I have again taken my pilgrim staff from behind the door in order to visit the magic land of India for the fourth time, and to steep myself once again in the glamour of the East under the wondrous glow of its midsummer sun.

The lapse of time had, I found, left India's sun,

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[Photo by Vernon & Co., Bombay

H.H. THE JAM SAHIB OF NAWANAGAR

In the robes of state he wore at his installation

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India's colours, India's scents, and Anglo-Indian hospitality unchanged. But what of India's peoples? It is beyond all question that within these last few years great changes have occurred here, that a crucial point in the history of the Peninsula is at hand. Thanks to Great Britain's mighty, almost superhuman, work of civilisation, the princes and peoples of India seem at length to be awakening out of the slumbrous passivity of the unchanging East.

The old kings are dying out, to make room for modern rulers. All strata, all classes, all parties are at length bestirring themselves to participation in the active life of the West. They no longer furnish the setting for magic scenes from the *Thousand and One Nights*; they are beginning to play a speaking, even a leading part in the drama.

To an ever-increasing degree are India's rulers beginning to lay aside the insignia of their sovereign rank. Clad in Norfolk jacket and riding-breeches, they are coming forward out of centuries of seclusiveness into the light of day; they are discarding the cumbrous, gilded chariot of state for the swift motor car. Among the populace the rigid fetters of caste tend in ever-increasing degree to wear looser; the ramparts of custom and prejudice, of formalism and etiquette, still holding out to the last with

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desperate obstinacy, are beginning to crumble in ever quicker succession; a breath of fresh air is beginning to stir the mouldy atmosphere of the old palaces, even of the fastnesses of the most stiff-necked superstitions.

No longer are great and humble alike frittering their lives away in indolence and sensuality; no longer are the rulers enslaving the masses under the yoke of brutal tyranny. England's genius for civilisation has at length won the day, and has made wide breaches in the phalanx of even the most reactionary of rulers. Western progress has opened the eyes of even the most patriarchal of monarchs. They are even now rubbing the sleep out of their eyes, are looking at the world through Western glasses, are open to conversion to our views, and are even to some extent ready to be fired by Western ambitions.

"Our fathers were brought up to be idle; enjoyment and extravagance were held up before their eyes as their most sacred duties," his Highness the Jam Sahib Maharajah of Jamnagar, my host at the time, remarked to me. "It is only in our English schools that we have been taught the lesson of *noblesse oblige*. Where our forebears were living riotously at the cost of their subjects, India's

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princes to-day are working hard to advance the weal of their people. And a similar change in the conception of the obligations of class distinctions has gradually spread over the whole of the Peninsula; kings, ministers, officers, officials, merchants, and craftsmen are inspired by a like consciousness of duty, and are learning to look the whole world in the face. In all avocations the standard set is a high one. Young India has already turned out notable civil servants, politicians, professors in every faculty, competent business men, thoroughly efficient mechanics and engineers, as well as capable craftsmen. And with Great Britain's help we shall continue to advance.

"For all that, India is still very far distant from that state of autonomous independence which Tillak and his gang preach, and for which their partisans clamour. We still continue to need England's strong arm to lead, to support, and to shield us — and this in spite of all our progressive civilisation, in spite of all our spread of education, and in spite of all initiative on our part. We still continue to be children who cannot do without wise, paternal tutelage. What would have been the fate of our congeries of nations, flourishing though they already be to-day, without

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England's guardianship? How fast our precious heritage would have been squandered in the follies and excesses of youth! One revolution after another would have laid waste the land that is already so rich to-day. Keir Hardie and his partisans, Tillak and his clever Baboos would no doubt be the first to be broiling on the funeral pyre of liberty.

"Neither now nor hereafter will the diverse fabrics of India ever be woven into a single nation; nor will the whole treasure-house of the Peninsula's hoarded jewels ever suffice to deck the Imperial crown of an Indian nation. Neither now nor ever hereafter will this world of ours be fit for self-government. But under Great Britain's provident and powerful guidance the Peninsula will grow into a homogeneous realm of a great-power standard, and into a dominant, powerful factor in the great arena of nations in the future — the markets of the world."

These the sentiments from the mouth of an Indian-grandee, whose latest ancestors were still wiping their feet on the sacred motto, *noblesse oblige*. Nor were they words only! From the dawn until late at night I watched the Jam Sahib at work. Ranjitsinhji is the moving spirit, the driving power, and the executive force in his own little

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realm. He is his own stoker, and he keeps things moving under a full head of steam. He is living and working for his people, and thereby he is advancing the prosperity of his country.

Every economic scheme finds its keenest supporter in him; foreign experts and foreign capital are enlisted to promote them. Thanks to his initiative, the pearl fisheries in Gulf of Kutch are being organised on scientific methods and being exploited on business principles. Copper mines in Kathiawar, neglected hitherto, are being opened up; barren tracts of country are being made productive by the purposeful cultivation of sugar-cane or cotton; in fact, the experimental cultivation of the new Spence cotton is already proving itself to be a profitable enterprise. New roads and projected railways are being taken in hand, harbour work and canal developments are in progress. Trade and traffic are, like the rains of the monsoon, already beginning after so long a drought to bring new lease of life to the parched wastes of Kathiawar and are increasing, to the immeasurable benefit of a population that was dying of slow starvation.

To very good purpose has Prince Ranjitsinhji, the hero of many an English cricket-field, spent fifteen years of his youth in the old country. Here it was

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he learnt to brace his muscles with bat and ball, but it was here, too, he served a valuable apprenticeship in learning England's art of opening up the waste places of the world.

"When I got back to India," said the Jam Sahib, with a laugh, "it was not all plain sailing when I first tried to pour the new wine into the old bottles of my compatriots. They would not even poison their rats and mice on the outbreak of the plague, although it is common knowledge in India that these vermin are particularly dangerous in disseminating infection. Why, we could not even get near the dying with our drugs, because the latter might make things unpleasant for the bacilli. Sooner than that, our patients preferred to die themselves."

Despite his many preoccupations, the prince still always finds time to arrange for the entertainment of his European guests. During my stay at Jamnagar, the members of one of his shooting parties included the Earl and Countess of Londesborough, and Lady Irene Denison, Sir Bindon Blood, Dr and Mrs Hensman, and Mr Pearson; and the Jam always proved himself to be the most cheery of hosts. There is something rather stimulating in the range of his Highness's conversational powers, for he has all the topics of the day both of the East and of the

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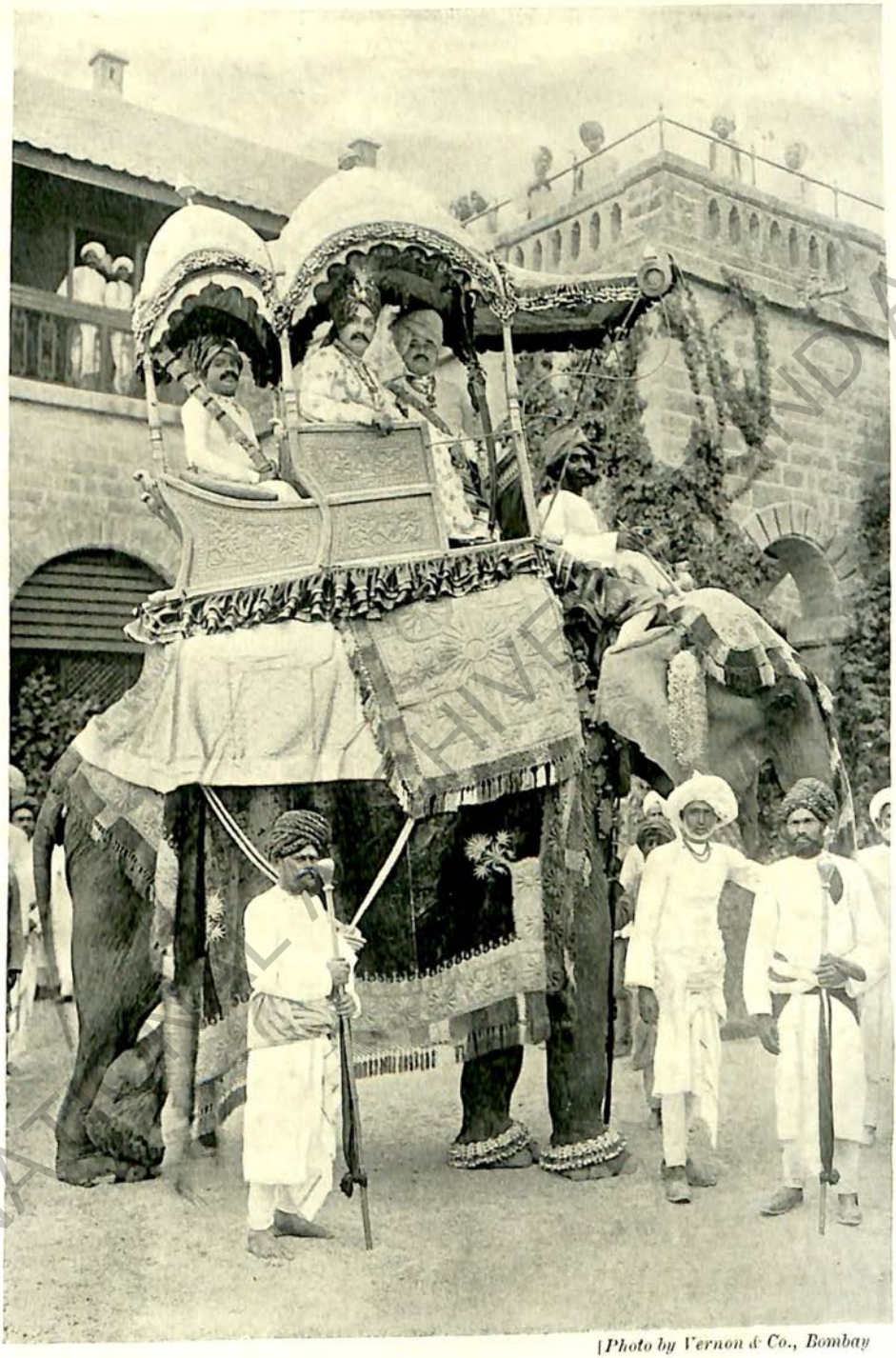

[Photo by Vernon & Co., Bombay

PRINCELY STATE

The Jam Sahib of Navanagar on his way to a state durbar

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West at his fingers' ends. He may start by discussing the prospects of the polo or cricket championships, and go on to compulsory service, *Dreadnoughts*, and tariffs. Unadorned kharki is his daily wear—the workaday kit of the Indian pioneer. His ancestral pearls, wrung out of the sweat of his subjects' brows, have lost their attraction for him. Kharki becomes him infinitely better.

What an old friend with a new face must the India of to-day be to an Anglo-Indian veteran like Sir Bindon Blood! Who would presume to attempt to follow his thoughts, when, on the first of April 1909, he said good-bye for good to the country for whose advancement and transformation he himself had spent forty of the most precious years of his eventful life? As for us laymen, how are we to endeavour to explain the metamorphosis of a world that seemed more immutable than the everlasting bedrock of the Himalayas? In the preceding chapters I have done my best to record my personal impressions of the great awakening that is, I believe, slowly but surely, dawning over India. Yet to what do such impressions amount to compared with the stupendous nature of the fact itself?

"God save the King!" To these familiar strains the Jam Sahib's private saloon rolled out of the station

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of Jamnagar, bearing the veteran commander on the first stage of his homeward journey. Visibly affected, the General stood at the window of his carriage. Many thousands of eyes followed him till the train disappeared; the hands of many thousands rose in the last salaam. The service troops of Jamnagar presented arms; the officers at their head, and the Jam Sahib, surrounded by all the dignitaries of the country, stood to the salute; and countless good wishes for his farewell from the populace, bowing low as the train passed, followed one of the most popular men in India on his homeward journey. Bugles blared, drums beat; the flags of the native regiments dipped for the last time to honour the hero of Malakand.

"God save the King!"

It is under this device that the youngsters fall in, the grown men go about their work and toilsome duties, that the time-expired take their leave. Their lives are freely spent in India's service to the greater honour of the British Empire.

"God save the King!"

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CHAPTER II

GWALIOR

I HAVE after all paid another visit to Gwalior. I have again beheld the tigers' paradise. And I have been entertained by the Maharajah Scindia in the most hospitable style.

On this occasion no blue envelope, fraught with regrets, cheated me of my expectations. Scarlet-clad body-servants conducted me to a smart motor car. Here I chanced to meet Mr Cobb, my friendly Amphitryon of Hyderabad.

"They are expecting you at the Palace. Better luck this time. I hope you'll get your tiger," chuckled Cobby, as they dubbed the distinguished official who is such a universal favourite throughout India. "Look me up in Indore. I have just been transferred there as agent to the Governor-General."

More Anglo-Indian hospitality! If only one had time enough or seven-league boots to take advantage of it.

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"Naotalao" my quarters are called. Dedicated for many a year to the prince's zenana, it has since the Prince of Wales's visit been promoted to serve as quarters for distinguished visitors. I fall asleep as soon as my head touches the pillow, and dream of the evicted sultanas.

At a very early hour in the morning his Highness does me the honour of calling.

"You will have to see the Fort," he remarks, after the first interchange of amenities. "It is well worth a visit." And without the option of a fine I am transferred on board a richly caparisoned elephant to see-saw up the long, sunny, hillside solitary and alone.

"How did you like the Fort?" the prince asked me that evening in the billiard room.

"You surely have seen the Fort," a veteran of the court dignitaries chimed in, as if to underline his master's inquiry. Nothing but that blessed Fort. I am already beginning to feel quite bored by the Fort. But no one breathes a word about the tigers, although we were living in the midst of the tigers' El Dorado.

"Major Goodenough, my inspecting officer, will be glad to show you something of the military efficiency of my Imperial service troops to-morrow morning," his Highness remarked, as I took my leave

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after three hours of billiards. So until the glare of a red-hot noon the Maharatta warriors waged mimic warfare against a skeleton enemy besieging the Fort. Amid the roar of artillery I turned the conversation, not without some slight sense of misgiving, on the subject of Gwalior's tigers. But the military gravity of the occasion did not allow us to discuss it to any useful purpose. We were still kept skirmishing about that blessed Fort.

And yet only a short time ago eight-and-twenty tigers fell to a Viceregal rifle in Gwalior. And all the notables of the Peninsula, including, I verily believe, the Right Reverend Father in God the Bishop himself, bagged half-a-dozen tiger skins—more or less—in accordance with the estimate of his rank and dignity that obtains in Gwalior. So runs, at any rate, the gossip of the bazaar, as my faithful servant Paul reports it to me with plenty of circumstantial embellishment.

"I am really most distressed" (what a philanthropist Scindia made me think him!) "not to be able to give you a tiger," said the prince, when, in the course of conversation, I made some casual reference to Paul's report. "Too many of them have been shot of late years. Would you like to see the skins of those we have bagged recently? Major Filose,

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my director of police, will show them to you in the museum."

And there they were undergoing their toilette, the biggest for the most eminent dignitaries. In awe-inspiring malevolence their bared jaws snarled under the cunning craftsmanship of the taxidermist's fingers. It was, in fact, a regular wholesale factory of tiger skins, this museum, with its decorative scheme of dried snakes and butterflies. And, as a souvenir of Gwalior, the Maharajah presented me with his royal tiger album—a series of historic snapshots in the wild jungle.

"Are you acquainted with the story of the Fort?" his Honour the Chief Justice asked me on the evening before my departure. "To put it in a nutshell, it was here that, after a gallant stand, the Maharattas' power of resistance broke—the last bulwark of Indian independence."

There was no getting away from that Fort. It simply stuck to me like a burr. From its isolated ridge of rock the masonry of the citadel frowns down on the town, and dominates its palaces. Stubborn and defiant still, its old grey walls glare down on the stranger and, with eery and provocative insistence, dog him far up country. More than a century has already elapsed since the Maharatta stronghold threw

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up the sponge, and yet the prestige of the Fort endures undiminished.

After all, we ought not to treat these old strongholds disrespectfully; we cannot afford to relegate them to the scrap-heap. Their foundations still stand, firm and unshaken. Their guns, it is true, bellow forth pacific summons, and their dummy charges only salute India's new era of civilisation and prosperity. But for all that, they speak in a dumb language all their own. They are for England's sons an abiding monument of their sires' heroic deeds; they preach the lesson of firmness of purpose, and symbolise the rule of the strong man armed—even until to-day still the one and only means of wielding crown and sceptre for the benefit of the nations of India. For the Indian has, in the course of thousands of years, been trained to the rôle of rigid obedience and accustomed to unconditional subservience. In the part of subject obedience he can do wonders. He has some respect for severity, but nothing but contempt for gentleness, which he interprets as another guise of weakness. The word "gratitude" has no place in any Indian vocabulary. "Salaam, Sahib," is all that the thousand years of his schooling have taught him.

And thus it still must be in the future, too, if

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India's great ship of state is not to be put in jeopardy.

Not without apprehension do the pioneers and the men on the spot keep their eye on the reforming zeal of amiable quidnuncs at home, who have never helped to breach India's old strongholds and have learnt all they know of India's red-hot summers from the picture posters to advertise the ice safes of the Western world. And all the more insistently therefore do the intelligent and loyal native princes of India visit with condign punishment every manifestation, however trivial in itself, on the part of the revolutionary elements.

In a native state of this type, they would have a short way with the baboo who dared to sling ink or even to open his mouth unless it were to say, "Salaam, Sahib."

Many of these feudal castles are still standing in the Peninsula cheek by jowl with the latter-day palaces. Sombrely do they silhouette the dawn of the new era, and raise their weather-beaten towers as if in warning. May they still stand for many a year, these old castles of India!

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CHAPTER III

THE HAPPY VALLEY

I HAVE reached the last stage of my fourth Indian pilgrimage, and therewith the sadness of farewell. The time has come, patient reader, if you have borne me company so far, when you and I must take leave of one another, when, at the call of new duties and responsibilities, I must take what may well be my last, and, if not, is in any case sure to be a long farewell of India. But is this spot India where I am saying good-bye?

No stagnant, breathless atmosphere here, no sun-scorched plains, no stealthy tiger-haunted jungles, no treacherous, twisted bridle-paths, no hidden water-courses here. It is the land of the ibex, of green meadows, of irises, and silver poplars. High above India's red-hot plains there lies a fairyland—"least, ast, loveliest, exquisite, apart"—the valley of Kashnir, the "Happy Valley." The air is as clear and

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as invigorating as new wine. Every prospect is wreathed in smiles. All roads are ruled with a plumb-line, all canals lead straight through this paradise of India, to a single goal—to the playground of house-boats, of honeymoons afloat (no doubt the sweetest)—to Srinagar.

"Selam, Sahib," is the greeting that meets the stranger here, "Welcome to the Happy Valley." And all the infinite multitudes of the flowers of the field, of irises of the most varied and glorious kinds, intoxicating in their fragrance, and gleaming in all the colours of the rainbow, carpet his progress up to the foot glaciers of gleaming and overwhelming majesty in their silver harness.

I am privileged to be the guest of the English Resident, Sir Francis Younghusband, and of his accomplished wife—of Younghusband, the man who hoisted the Union Jack over Lhassa. And the giants of the Himalayas—whose mighty resistance, for all their armour of untarnished snow, he at last fought down—here, round the Happy Valley of Srinagar, link their silver crowns, the heirlooms of countless centuries, into the victor's wreath he has won so well. He has been my host, and, though I find it hard to say anything new of the virtues of Anglo-Indian hospitality, the best has perhaps been reserved for the last. I

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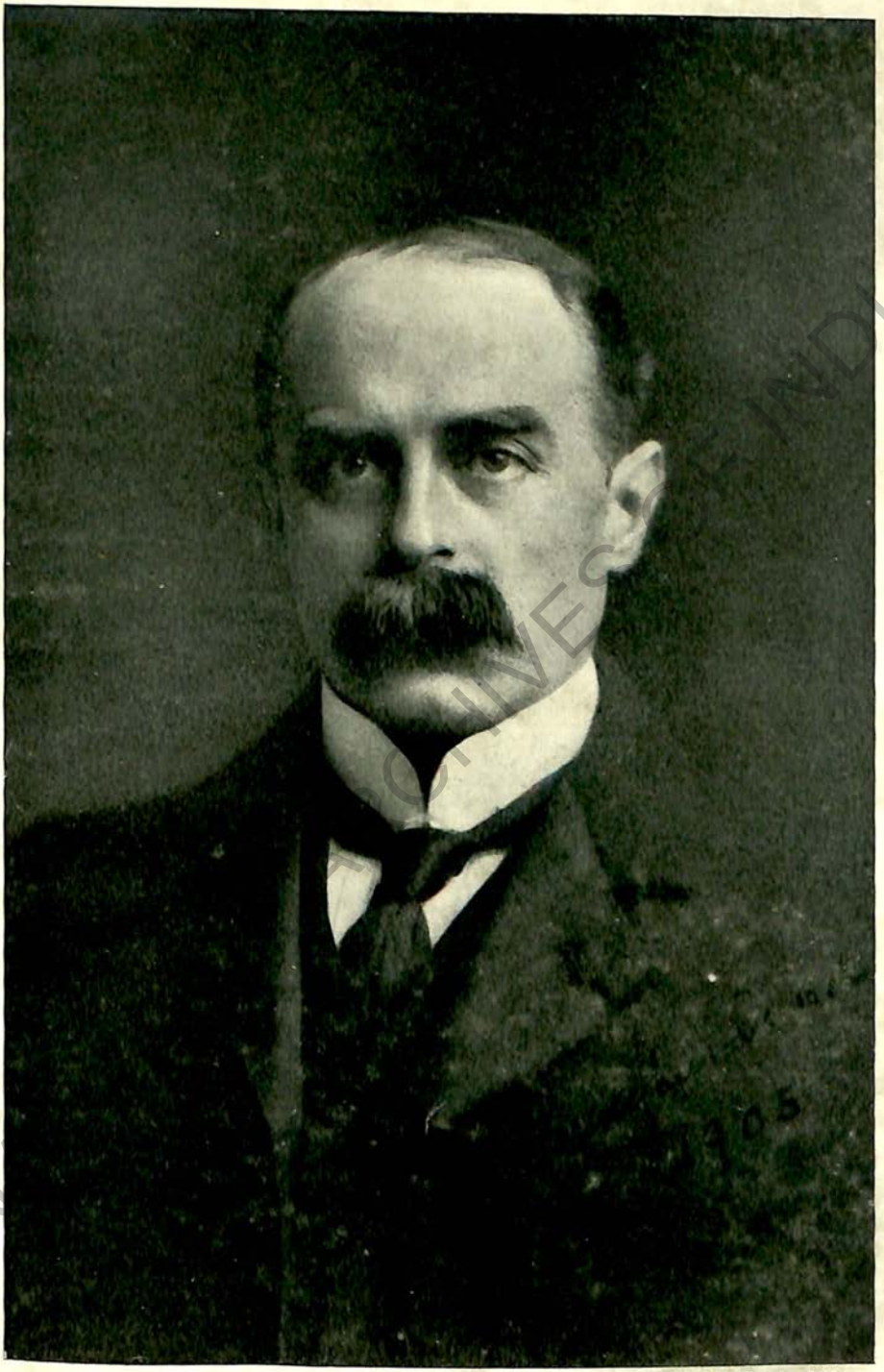

[Photo by Lewis, Clifton

SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, K.C.I.E.

British Resident in Kashmir, and my host at Srinagar

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am now even able to look back on my lost tigers of Gwalior, of which an envious Fate has cheated me, without bitterness of spirit. For has it not been vouchsafed me to bring home, after many a long day's stalk on the hem of the eternal snows, the more coveted trophy of a markhor's horns, a noble head measuring 41 inches from tip to tip? Also has not a red mountain bear fallen to my rifle? Hereafter let viceroys and other notables bag their hand-fed tigers by the dozen. The Happy Valley has given me sport that has assuaged all lesser ambitions.

I have made new friends, though that does not make the task of saying good-bye any the easier. The 12th Lancers from the Colonel to the last-joined subaltern have entertained me right royally, and I claim every member of their mess as a friend and comrade. I envy the gallant regiment for their smart, soldierly C.O., but still more do I envy them for the society of their Colonel's beautiful and charming wife. Throughout all my Indian pilgrimages I have been fortunate enough to have had many occasions to pay the tribute of my homage to the courage and the charm of the Englishwoman in India, and it is my good fortune now that the memories of my sojourn in the earthly paradise of Srinagar's Happy Valley will always be associated

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with the fascinating personality of Mrs Clifton-Brown.

And so it is good-bye—good-bye to all the kind friends and pleasant acquaintances whose hospitality I have enjoyed, and whose goodwill I cherish, through the length and breadth of the Peninsula. Shall we ever meet again? It is indeed not easy to say good-bye to India and what India has come to mean for me.

As I am writing these lines my eyes stray across the rose gardens of the Residency to the old Fort of Srinagar on the hill opposite. In every detail of its architecture it recalls the pictures they have shown me of the temple fort of Lhassa, so long the virgin stronghold of the invincible Dalai Lamah. How often must Sir Francis Younghusband have looked out on Srinagar's Fort, while his thoughts flitted across that endless world of glaciers to that distant spot at the Back of Beyond where he raised the King-Emperor's flag to the dedication:

"Greater India, Greater Britain—God save the King"!

SRINAGAR,
June 1909.

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